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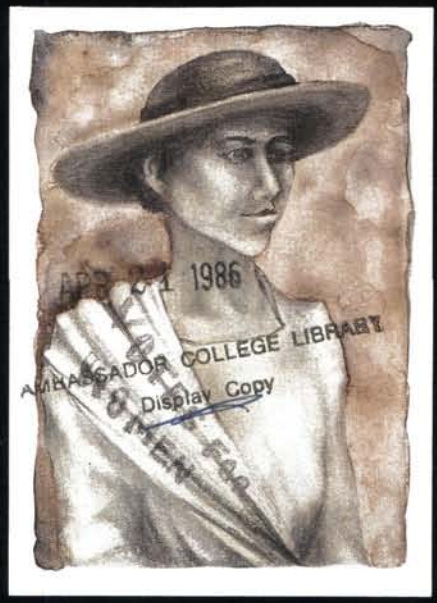

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by Dorothy Wickenden

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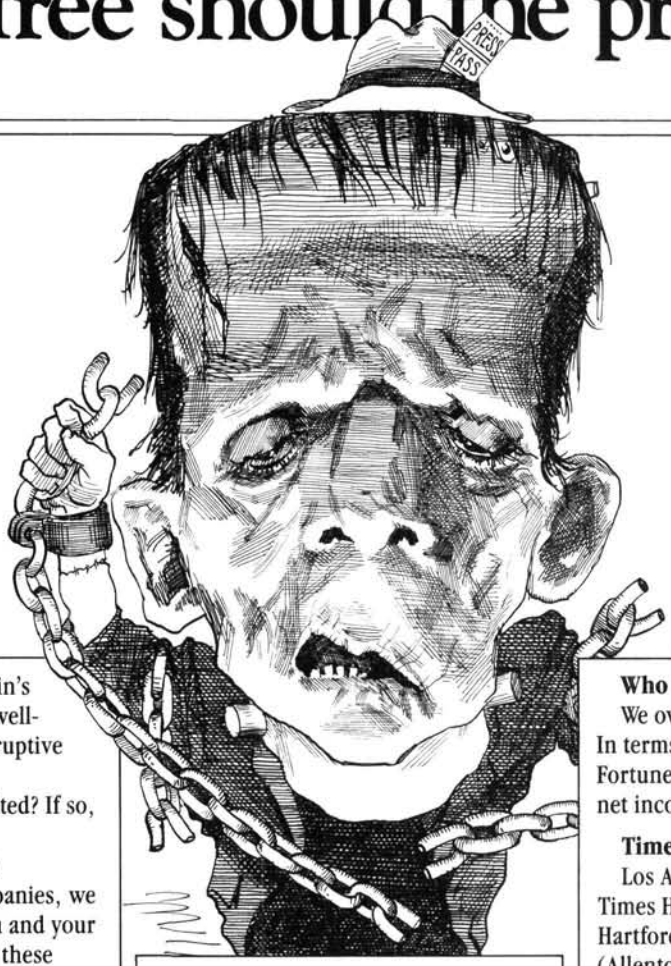

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FOUNDED 1914 — *A Weekly Journal of Opinion* — ISSUE 3,720

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FROM WASHINGTON

LIFE IMITATES ART

The latest and most ominous innovation in the Reagan-era art of cashing in on power is hatching in the laboratory of Assistant Secretary of Defense Richard Perle. According to the *Washington Post*, Perle's lawyer is circulating a proposal for an "epistolary novel" about Perle's experiences at the Pentagon. Bidding by publishers had hit $300,000 when the auction was suspended because Perle had to go abroad on the people's business.

Perle has never before published any fiction, at least so-labeled by him. But, according to the *Post*, "Perle's proposal is said to make a point of assuring prospective publishers that Perle would alter real events only as much as necessary to earn the label of novel." Attached to the proposal is another *Post* article describing Perle as "the chief architect of the Reagan administration's policy toward the Soviet Union."

The plot of the "novel" reportedly involves the dramatic clash between an assistant secretary of defense, much like Perle, and an assistant secretary of state, much like his bureaucratic rival Richard Burt, now the insufferably smug and self-promoting U.S. ambassador to West Germany. (Sample dialogue, Burt to Perle: "Is that an epistolary novel in your pocket, or are you just glad to see me?")

By now we are used to the spectacle of former high officials capitalizing on their friendships with those in power. What's alarming about Perle's high-priced book proposal is that he seems to have figured out a way to capitalize on his enemies. This raises all sorts of unusual conflicts of interest. The ambitious younger members of the Reagan administration are already afflicted with a penchant for self-dramatization. One thinks of Richard Darman at the Treasury Department, and of course David Stockman, along with a whole aviary of defense hawklets. Do we really want to add a financial edge to this ego hunger?

Obviously, the more exciting Richard Perle can make his tenure at the Defense Department, the more money publishers will be willing to pay for his "novel." But if Perle really is the chief architect of our side of the superpower rivalry, as he seems to think, it surely is in the nation's interest that his official career be as unexciting as possible. Theatrical confrontations and high-wire diplomatic maneuvering may make for good reading, but they don't make for a very comforting foreign policy. If Perle's petty spat with Richard Burt is worth more than $300,000, think how much he could get for an actual war.

Senator Sam Nunn has objected, rightly, that Perle can't claim simultaneously that this is just a novel and has nothing to do with his job, and that it's worth huge sums of money because it's full of inside dope. Perle reassures that he doesn't intend to take any money until he leaves office, and this leaves him in roughly the same ethical position as any other official who writes his memoirs.

It might be thought that the promise of a large pile of cash from a book publisher is less corrupting of an official in Perle's position than a similar pile from a defense contractor. There have been no allegations that even Cap Weinberger's Pentagon is squandering too much money on books. But at least a defense contractor has no special interest in seeing the weapons it has sold actually put to the test. Quite the reverse, in fact. A book publisher, by contrast, once it has signed up a prospect—especially for something billed as a true-life "novel" rather than a stately memoir—has a financial stake in the maximum possible fireworks. This could be dangerous. Too many of these Reaganites seem to think they're living in a pulp novel anyway.

The tendency of high government officials toward unhealthy self-dramatization often gets fed by journalists. There's a symbiotic relationship between the subject of a story and the reporter, both of whom have an interest in painting with bright primary colors. As an editor, I also get swept into these conspiracies of overdramatization. They happen even when the subject knows or suspects that the basic slant of the story will be hostile. The bigger an ogre Richard Perle is perceived to be, the more broadly he can

continued on page 41

The unexamined billions.

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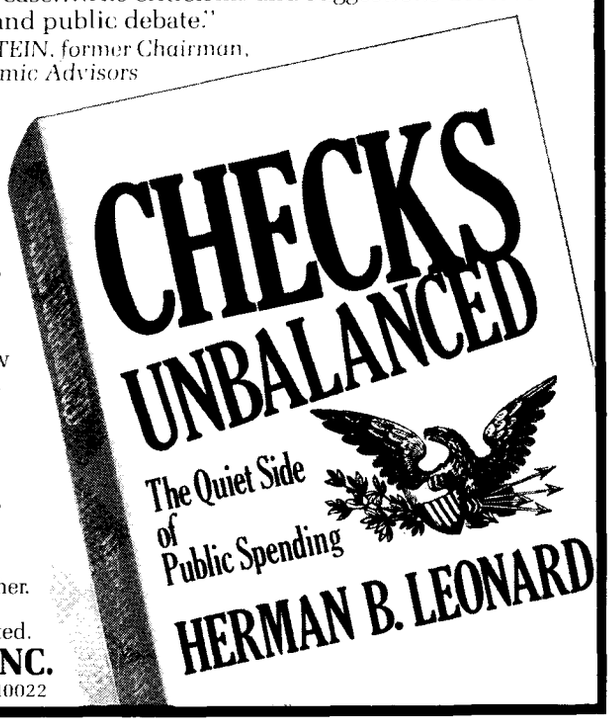

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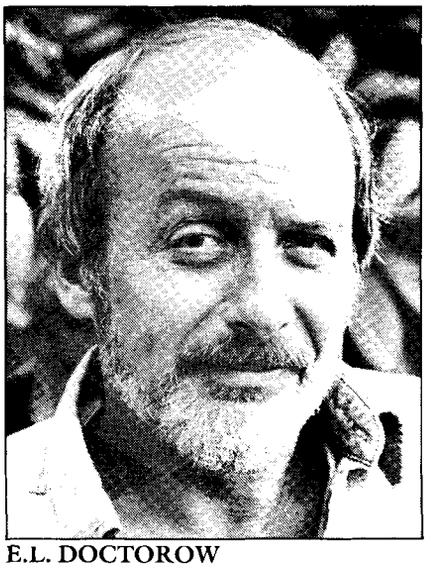

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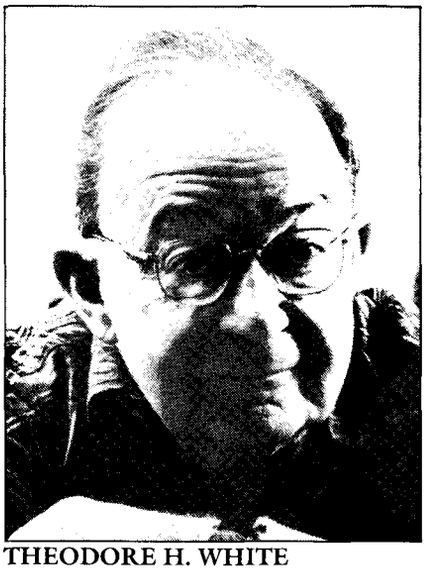

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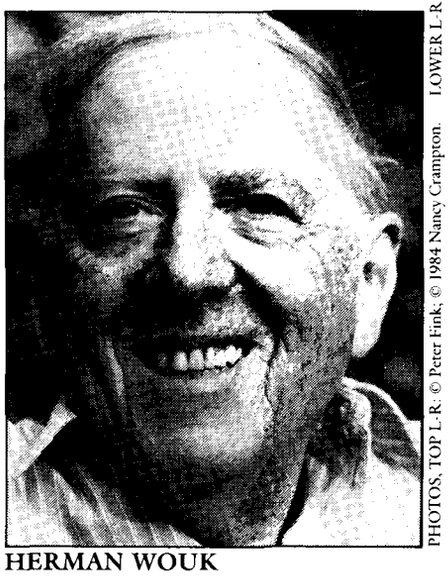

HERMAN WOUK

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Some of their best works began in the same setting.

Whether their books begin in the south of France or the streets of New York City, all of these authors chose the same place to work—The New York Public Library.

It's where E. L. Doctorow did research for *Ragtime*. It's where Herman Wouk worked on *The Caine Mutiny*, Nancy Milford wrote *Zelda*, and Theodore H. White, *The Making of the President, 1964*.

Author Jerzy Kosinski said, "This library is probably the most important single address I can think of since my arrival in this country twenty-seven years ago."

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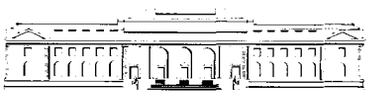

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WHERE THE FUTURE IS AN OPEN BOOK

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CORRESPONDENCE

LATIN LOANERS

To the editors:

In James S. Henry's article "Where the Money Went" (April 14), he repeats fallacious statements against the president of Mexico, Miguel de la Madrid.

This embassy already indicated the falsehood of Jack Anderson's statements when in May 1984, on the basis of a supposedly secret U.S. intelligence report, he accused the Mexican president of transferring millions of dollars to a Swiss bank account. Mr. Henry not only insists on Mr. Anderson's allegation, but affirms that this fact was confirmed by the *New York Times*, which is absolutely false.

Many citizens of various countries who traditionally maintain extensive relations with Mexico are well aware of the irreproachable public and private behavior of President de la Madrid. Any well-informed reader must express surprise in seeing a prestigious magazine such as THE NEW REPUBLIC publish statements that can cause, with impunity, moral harm to a country and to an honest statesman. To accuse President de la Madrid of illicit appropriation of government funds is simply an irresponsible and preposterous allegation made in the worst of faiths.

JORGE ESPINOSA DE LOS REYES
Ambassador, Mexican Embassy
Washington, D.C.

To the editors:

James Henry's article on Latin American debt is terrific reporting: timely, punchy, and revelatory. Here is information that no one else has dug out, and it is clear why. The money-center banks have a great deal to fear from exposure. First, in the 1970s they let a horde of wet-behind-the-ears MBAs shovel money into Third World loans without a care as to where it was going—and it was mostly squandered. Then in the 1980s they devised complicated schemes for Latin America's cousins of Ferdinand and Imelda to evade taxes and avoid capital-flight restrictions.

Perhaps the Baker initiative should include provisions to tax foreigners on their U.S. income (automatic withholding) and require banks to report foreigners' holdings of U.S. assets, thus reducing our budget deficit and letting the Third World's peoples know what is going on. Then perhaps the basic thrust of the initiative, to expand free markets in the troubled economies, can succeed.

C. C. THARP
Chevy Chase, Maryland

PENNY'S THOUGHTS

To the editors:

There you go again. The so-called "Pendleton pattern," as reported in the April 14 TNR ("Bad Penny" by Steven T. Goldberg), continues the media's trend of stringing together already-published (and answered) half-truths, innuendos, and information extracted out of rational context—and adding a few more unsubstantiated allegations to form another "new look" at my public and private life.

A lie is as good as the truth as long as you get enough people to believe it, or reprint it, as in this article. Mr. Goldberg has devoted the last year or so of his life to trashing me wherever he can get in print, and I have come not to expect him to observe even minimal standards of journalistic fair play. I am just disappointed that THE NEW REPUBLIC took Mr. Goldberg's bait.

CLARENCE M. PENDLETON JR.
Chairman
United States Commission on Civil Rights
Washington, D.C.

DRUG TESTING ATHLETES

To the editors:

I applaud your observations on the frightening increase in the use of urinalysis in the workplace ("The Yellow Peril," March 31). I am writing, however, to contest your suggestion that pro athletes might be acceptable candidates for such testing because "part of their job is to serve as role models for children."

Sports in U.S. society is a phenomenon filled with oddities, not the least of which is the idea that wealthy young men and women in a high-dollar, high-pressure, highly unstable profession are obliged to be role models for the country's youth. The argument that this is appropriate is accepted with much greater solemnity than is realistic and is, like a Rockwell portrait, the product of an era that probably never was.

We would go a long way toward helping drug-abusing athletes and their young fans by acknowledging the simple

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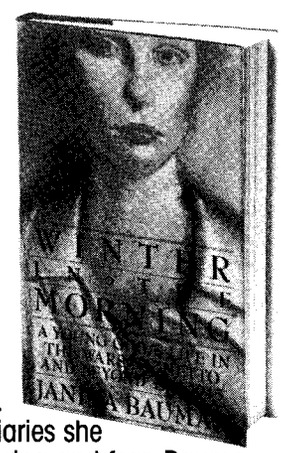
COMING OF AGE IN A TIME OF UNSPEAKABLE HORROR.



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THE NEW REPUBLIC
MAY 5, 1986

THE RESPONSE TO TERROR

In the Middle East, as in much of the world, if a ruler can ward off the assassin's hand, he need not govern effectively or justly to remain in power. But the career of Colonel Muammar al-Qaddafi demonstrates that the key to power in a place like Libya is not just brute force. It is the ability to mesmerize the mob. The mob is fickle, easily roused and easily disenchanted. With minimum expectations of what life might otherwise offer in a rationally organized economy and free polity, it feeds on slogans and fantasies. Still, it takes skill for a person to sate a mob for 17 years on such an insubstantial diet. And Qaddafi, eyes wild with rage and given to threnodic oratory, has that special demonic knack that has enabled some other tyrants of our era (not all in the Middle East, to be sure) to keep the people in their thrall.

For the dictator in Tripoli, the armed doctrine is hatred—hatred of the West, hatred of the Jews, and hatred of the United States. This message is also heard elsewhere in the Middle East, and sometimes with equal virulence. What differentiates Qaddafi from his Middle East peers is not the fact that he takes such rhetoric as sanction for terror. After all, Hafez al-Assad of Syria is surely responsible for the death of many more Americans and other innocents than Qaddafi is.

But there are two demarcating differences. The first is that Qaddafi has never pretended to statesmanship. He has never been Jimmy Carter's favorite Middle East politician (though he came close; he was Billy's). Nor has he, like Assad, ever had friends from time to time in the Reagan administration. The second difference is that Qaddafi, unlike Assad, is not under the special protection of the Soviet Union. When Qaddafi tried to claim that protection last week in order to deflect what seemed like an inevitable U.S. retaliation for his countless provocations, Georgi Arbatov, the authoritative Soviet voice on relations with Washington, went on American television to say that the Libyan dictator has no such protection. In the days before the American attack, Russian ships apparently also discreetly left Libyan waters. All that was left to the scenario were the bombs themselves.

Oh yes. Also our European allies. Except for the British, they did not behave as President Reagan would have liked. The French—and the Spaniards, our latest NATO ally—did not assent to the raids, and forced our aircraft originating in Britain into a humiliating flight plan that added 1,200 dangerous nautical miles to the mission, each way. To compensate for this pusillanimity, President Mitterrand "affirmed France's and my own determination to continue fighting relentlessly against terrorism." The Italians, who'd foolishly behaved for years as if the terrorists they propitiated would exempt their citizens from massacres, also affirmed their relentless determination.

In trying to understand the fecklessness of our European partners in democracy, we might pause to remember that it is now 30 years since Suez, when, in a fit of misplaced moralism, John Foster Dulles treacherously undercut our French and British allies at a critical moment in their histories. With this began the futile American courtship of Gamal Abdel Nasser, whose yoke the Egyptian people had to bear for another decade and a half. Had we not panicked the two European powers into retreat, subsequent developments in the Middle East would have been far more peaceful, and far more conducive to orderly modernization. Moreover, we would have had allies who could trust us—and whom, as a consequence, we could trust.

One reason Britain gave tactical and moral support for the Libyan operation is that London has experienced particularly traumatic instances of Libyan terrorism. In addition, there sits at 10 Downing Street an uncharacteristic Tory serendipitously attuned to the temperament of the man who sits in the White House. But even this would not have sufficed had the United States not supported Britain in its Falklands war against Argentina. An alliance is a two-way transaction or it is not an alliance at all.

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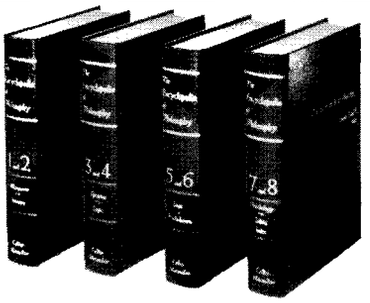

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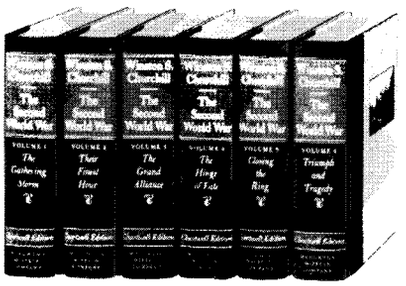

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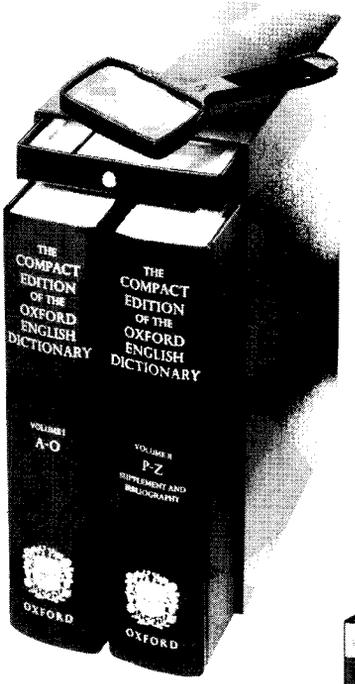
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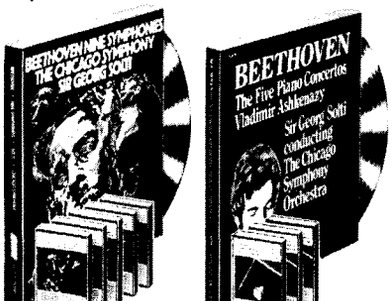
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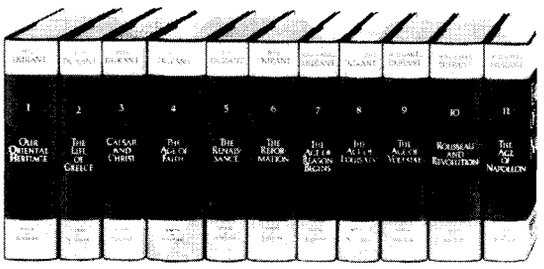

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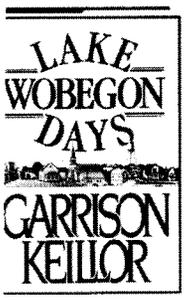

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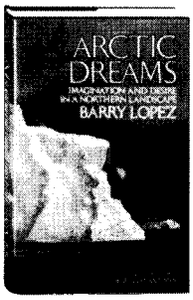

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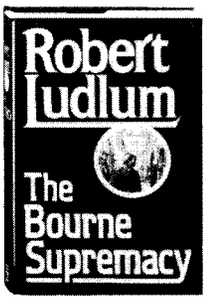

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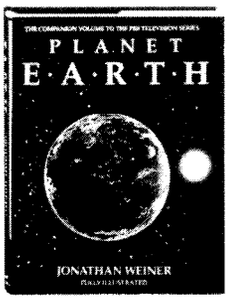

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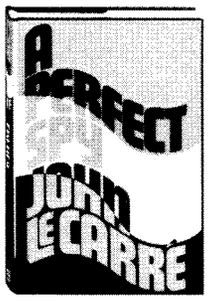

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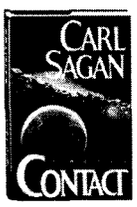

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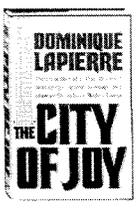

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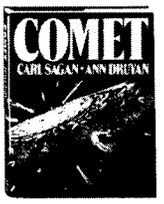

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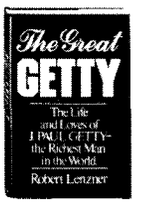

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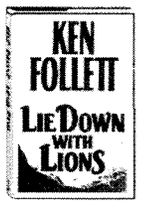

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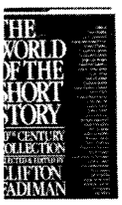

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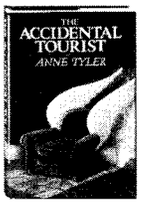

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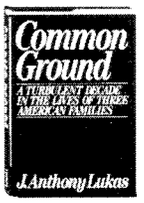

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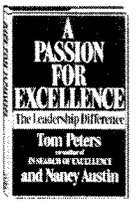

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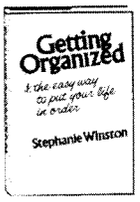

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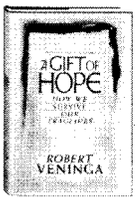

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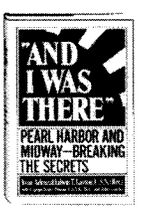

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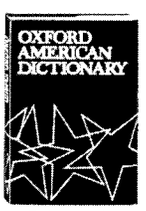

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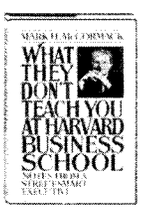

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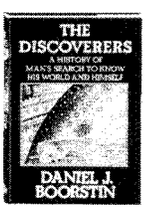

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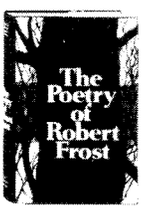

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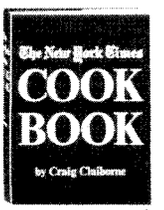

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Notwithstanding their churlishness about U.S. military action against Libya, it was precisely this action that finally pushed the European Economic Community countries into taking limited measures against Libya they should have taken years ago. The "clear consensus" against terrorism that the Italian prime minister's adviser on foreign policy said was "developing in Europe" was a consensus on timid steps. These amount to putting some constraints on the number of people attached to Libya's so-called People's Bureaus, where much of the traffic in terrorist arms and passports has been carried out.

It is too early at this writing to tell what concrete effect the raids will have on Qaddafi's behavior. It took a visiting professor of government at Harvard to observe, as the *Boston Globe* reported, that "Qaddafi may lie low for a while but he may not." One anxiety about President Reagan's policy that we share is whether a great power should mobilize so much emotional energy and military force against someone who is after all nothing more than a tin-pot or, to put it more accurately, an oil-barrel dictator, and yet still permit him to remain in power.

But an important principle has been established: American lives cannot be taken without cost. That is, in fact, a principle of justice. For the president now has behind him, as he does not have for any other active aspect of his foreign policy, a united people. What we have done once in Libya we can do again, and elsewhere too. This may even give pause to Moscow's terrorist clients. Grenada aside, Reagan never has had such unity as a political asset in his dealings with the Soviet Union or with their various proxies in the Middle East.

The reflexive nay-sayers in the U.S. are now prophesying a surge in Qaddafi's prestige among the mob that is the base of his power. But how do they know its mercurial ways? As we go to press, there are sketchy reports of fighting in the streets of Tripoli. Even in Libya, a state but hardly a nation, there may be some other colonel or perhaps even a dissenting politician who can persuade the people that a small country, however bloated its recent oil revenues and its visions of grandeur and revenge, cannot really wage war against the United States of America. And then maybe the loyalty of the mob will be lost even to Qaddafi.

Set Set-Asides Aside

Hardly anybody seems to take the work of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights seriously these days. The mean-spirited sarcasm of Clarence M. Pendleton Jr. has opened the way for those who disagree with anything that bears his agency's imprimatur. Pendleton has done lasting damage to his commission by making it easy to dismiss its studies without addressing their arguments or evidence. That was exactly what happened last week when the Civil Rights Commission's draft report on minority set-asides—programs that reserve a fraction of government contracts for minorities and women—was leaked to the press. Another polemical free-for-all about Pendleton ensued, and the substance of the study was quickly forgotten as usual.

Representative Parren J. Mitchell, who chairs the House Committee on Small Businesses, said the report had "no substantive value because it was done as part and parcel of a much larger scheme to discredit the minority business community." Mitchell called Pendleton "a low-level kind of houseboy in the administration." The White House promptly undermined Mitchell's assertion by repudiating the commission's study and reaffirming its support for set-aside quotas. The administration, of course, opposes all other racial preference schemes. The commission, ordered to rework the report in response to the various quarrels, will probably return in a few months with the same recommendations—suitably watered down.

More study is the last thing this subject needs. After a trial period of nearly 20 years, it's clear that minority set-asides are an abysmal failure. They've consistently been susceptible to widespread corruption. And even if the fraud could be eliminated, there's little evidence that set-asides help to create legitimate minority businesses. The evidence demonstrating that set-asides don't work isn't contradicted by the fact that Clarence Pendleton happens to agree with it.

EVERY PRESIDENT since Nixon has supported setting aside a share of federal contracts for minority businesses. Since 1968 the Small Business Administration has reserved a share of government contracts from competitive bidding under its so-called 8(a) program. SBA regulations stipulate that the contracts go to "socially or economically disadvantaged persons," including but not limited to black Americans, American Indians, Hispanic Americans, Oriental Americans, Eskimos, and Aleuts. Having served in the armed forces during the Vietnam War may qualify you as socially disadvantaged. Women can establish their disadvantaged status "on a case-by-case basis." Hasidic Jews proved their disadvantaged position to someone's satisfaction once, and now qualify for Commerce Department set-asides too. Of course you don't actually have to fit into any of these groups so long as you have a friend who does. Most agencies' set-aside regulations allow "disadvantaged" status for any firm with 51 percent minority ownership.

A number of laws passed during the past ten years, such as the 1977 Public Works Act and the 1982 Surface Transportation Assistance Act, include provisions for ten percent minority set-asides. The ten percent provision applies just as much to Vermont, which has a minority population of less than one percent, as it does to Mississippi, which is more than one-third black. To comply with its quota, Vermont has to hire already successful black contracting firms in Massachusetts, rather than favoring local companies owned by whites. State and local set-aside laws have also included provisions with quotas as high as 35 percent.

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Most recently, in 1983 President Reagan issued an executive order requiring all federal agencies to produce plans for "minority business enterprise development," and establish minority contracting "objectives."

THESE PROGRAMS breed two kinds of corruption. (See "The Set-Aside Scam" by Michael Oreskes, TNR, December 24, 1984.) In the first, firms that are actually owned by whites employ black owners as fronts. The second involves actual minority contracting firms that may not own a single shovel, winning contracts in protected markets, and "brokering" subcontracts to white-owned firms. These scams became so common in the 1970s that the SBA itself declared a three-month moratorium on the section 8(a) program in 1977.

The moratorium was lifted, and the schemers went back to work. An SBA internal audit revealed that 20 percent of the firms participating in the 8(a) program in 1978 and 1979 were shams. According to a Department of Transportation audit, half of the supposedly minority-owned companies doing road work in several states between 1982 and 1984 under the DOT set-aside program were "ineligible or questionable." According to the Civil Rights Commission draft report, 20 to 25 percent of the companies taking advantage of several other federal set-aside programs are fronts. Of course, the question of whether a particular front is legal often amounts to regulatory hairsplitting. Say two blacks and two whites go into business together. Their firm is legitimately "disadvantaged" if the blacks own a majority of the stock, but it's an illegal front if they own a minority and claim that they are minority owned.

These quotas have cost taxpayers millions. The Federal Highway Administration estimates that its set-aside program added $180 million to its contracting costs in 1984 alone. Chicago is about to award a contract for health insurance for city employees to a minority-owned D.C. firm; another firm offered to provide the same contract for one million dollars less. And set-asides have a social price as well. The FHA requires general contractors to subcontract ten percent of their road work to minority firms. But a typical highway construction company only delegates one-tenth of its work in the first place. For that reason, many firms have been required by law to use only minority subcontractors, and white-owned subcontracting companies have been put out of business.

There's no evidence to support the assertion that set-asides help black firms get started and gradually wean them from government handouts. Only a few hundred firms have ever "graduated" from the SBA's program; in 1980, 12 years after 8(a) began, exactly one firm graduated. And when set-asides do work as intended, their benefits go primarily to those least deserving of help. In the District of Columbia, for example, a GAO study concluded that in 1980 more than 75 percent of $39 million worth of minority contracts went to nine already successful firms. Throwing money at wealthy blacks and hoping some of it trickles down is not the best way to aid those at the bottom.

Principled opponents of quotas make a more abstract argument against set-asides. They argue that such quotas unfairly punish those who aren't guilty of discrimination, and distribute the same amount of restitution to minority groups that have suffered to different degrees in the past. To our mind, these arguments are valid but hardly necessary given the obvious failure of set-aside programs. For its part, the White House has never provided any explanation of its support for this least-justifiable form of quotas. Perhaps it has something to do with the administration's hope that black businessmen will become loyal black Republicans. Pendleton was absolutely correct last week when he said the administration "has to stop speaking with a double voice and a double meaning."

But Pendleton speaks with forked tongue himself, having taken advantage of the racial preference programs he criticizes. As Steven T. Goldberg recently reported in these pages (see "Bad Penny," April 14), Pendleton served as phony front man for white businessmen in 1980. And until January, Pendleton ran a company that advised businesses on how to take advantage of SBA loans earmarked for minority companies. It is partly because of such contradictions that Pendleton ought to heed commission member John Bunzel's call for him to resign. Pendleton's presence has unnecessarily damaged the credibility of the worthy set-aside study, a study that he neither wrote nor supervised.

But perhaps more important, as Bunzel has pointed out, Pendleton has poisoned the national dialogue on civil rights. His attacks on the motives of those who have legitimate disagreements with him have imbued long-simmering fights with a new and unnecessary viciousness. It's time to set aside set-asides and pitch Penny too.

NOTEBOOK

□ WE'RE ALL SOCIALISTS NOW: The subversion of tax reform continues apace in the Senate Finance Committee (see "Senator Hackwood," page 12). A special class of business investments, called "lobbyist property"—whoops, make that "productivity property"—has been created to exempt favored industries from the rigors of evenhanded depreciation rules. Should the government be in the business of deciding which kinds of private enterprise are "productive" and which kinds aren't? Doesn't that smack of—well, let's not use the "s" word, but how about "industrial policy"? That was an idea President Reagan heartily denounced when the Democrats were throwing it around a couple of years ago. But now, reacting to this latest Finance Committee lunacy, Deputy Treasury Secretary Richard Darman reveals the administration's terrible secret to the *Washington Post*: "We've been in the business of state economic planning as long as we've been in the business of practical politics." Mr. Darman, meet Mr. Lenin.

□ HOW HE DOES IT: ". . . the trick is to learn most lessons from the experiences of others. Managers who have

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learned much from personal experience in the past usually are destined to learn much from personal experience in the future." (Megabusinessman Warren Buffet in the 1985 annual report of his company, Berkshire Hathaway Inc.)

□ THAT'S CAPITALISM, CONTINUED: Last week we wrote, in arguing against a bailout for the oil industry, "As with any dramatic economic change, there are winners and losers, but that's capitalism." On rereading, this formulation strikes us as a bit callous. Obviously there are real losers from the oil collapse—people who are losing their jobs, not just oil barons who are down a few million dollars. We think all of society's losers deserve more help than they're getting during the Reagan era. But losers in the oil collapse deserve no special consideration. And artificially shoring up oil prices is a silly way to help poor people, since the direct beneficiaries are rich people—owners of oil—and the burden is borne by poor and middle-class consumers.

□ INSANITY CUBED: Two weeks ago in this space we reported the latest idiocy of the farm price support system, involving government payments to farmers to brand and slaughter a million cows in order to reduce the supply of dairy products. Three weeks ago TRB complained about the use of tax-free municipal bonds to supply cheap capital for private businesses. These two bits of insanity come together in a story reported by Ward Sinclair in the *Washington Post* April 12. It seems a local development authority in Macon County, Georgia, has floated $4.5 million of tax-exempt bonds to be used in the construction of a 20,000-cow dairy farm. In other words, the federal government is subsidizing these farmers to expand dairy production at the same time it is subsidizing other farmers to *reduce* dairy production. Adding to the insanity is the fact that the company getting this subsidy from American taxpayers is foreign (Irish). It's the foreigner aspect that seems to be stirring most of the resentment. But speaking as taxpayers, we don't like getting ripped off by fellow Americans any better.

□ CAN YOU TOP THIS?

Worthwhile Canadian Initiative

These three words, which appeared over Flora Lewis's column in the April 10 *New York Times*, strike many experts as possibly the most boring headline ever written. Each word taken alone is sleep-inducing. Taken together, they are virtually lethal. Our scientific curiosity is aroused. Has there ever been a more boring headline? Is it possible even to imagine a more boring headline? Readers are invited to try. Please send your nominations to "Worthwhile Canadian Initiative," c/o Jamie Baylis, THE NEW REPUBLIC, 1220 19th Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. The winner will receive a copy of *A Time to Heal* by Gerald Ford. All boring headlines become the property of THE NEW REPUBLIC.

ON THE HILL

SENATOR HACKWOOD

THREE THINGS you need to know about Republican Bob Packwood of Oregon, the chairman of the Senate Finance Committee. One, he is not a loner. How the loner business got started is anybody's guess, but it's a Washington myth that never seems to die. Packwood plays squash nearly every day with Senators Arlen Specter (in the morning) and John Chafee (afternoons). He whacked Specter across the mouth with his racket not long ago, causing a deep gash in Specter's lip. Packwood tore up his own knee, and it required surgery. The daily games, friendly but competitive, continued anyway. Still, the loner myth persists.

Two, Packwood is not gripped with fear of losing his Senate seat. An anti-abortion Baptist minister is challenging him in the Republican primary, and Representative James Weaver is the likely Democratic candidate against him this fall, but neither is much of a threat. Packwood pretends to be bracing for trouble. "Every year there is one candidate that the press says can't be beat that's beaten," he told the *Wall Street Journal*. "I'm trying to make sure that isn't me." But he isn't trying very hard. A month before the primary, he passed up a chance to campaign in Oregon and drove off to Williamsburg, Virginia, for a weekend retreat.

Three, Packwood couldn't care less about tax reform. When the Reagan administration unveiled its first tax-reform plan late in 1984, Packwood was blasé. "I sort of like the tax code the way it is," he said. He wasn't kidding. "For Packwood, that probably represents his entire philosophy of taxation," says Etta Fielek, his press secretary. He likes to use the tax code "to get people to do certain things." A tax break to encourage the timber industry here, an exemption for health insurance—that is Packwood's idea of good tax law. The notion that all income should be treated the same, a fundamental principle of tax reform, is anathema to him.

Packwood would have been deliriously happy if tax reform hadn't reached the Senate this year. Some Republicans interpreted his comment last December that he planned few changes in the Democratic tax bill then pending in the House as encouragement to GOP House members to vote against the legislation. The bill squeaked through, thanks to a rescue effort by President Reagan. "If it had failed, a lot of folks would have been happy," says William Diefenderfer, the influential staff director of the Finance Committee. "You've got people [on the committee] who don't believe in tax reform in the classic sense. I'm one of them. You've got people who don't want any tax bill."

Given all this, Packwood's work on tax reform in the Finance Committee becomes understandable. Were he really a loner, he would have produced a bill with his own stamp on it. Instead, he accommodated member after member of the committee who wanted a special tax break for one interest or another. Packwood treated Reagan the same way. You want a 35 percent top rate on individual

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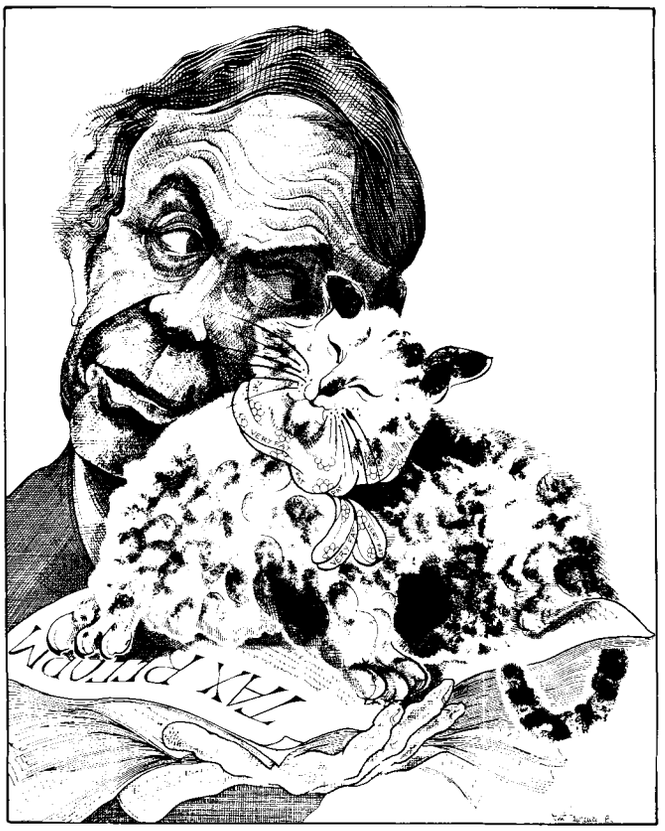
income, a $2,000 personal exemption, and easier depreciation? You got it. The lower rate and higher exemption, along with a stringent minimum tax, are practically the only reform elements left in the bill.

Were Packwood anxious about his reelection bid, he would not have been so accommodating. The political cost would have been too high. By loading up the bill with special breaks sought by committee members, he found himself with a bill that could balloon the deficit by up to $75 billion. He had to come up with a revenue source fast, and that turned out to be nondeductibility of excise taxes and tariffs. Trouble is, it's an extremely regressive solution, since the increased cost to producers will be passed on to customers, hitting middle- and low-income people the hardest. Anheuser-Busch complained that the excise tax gimmick would increase the price of a case of beer by 60 cents, a six-pack by 20 cents. Increasing the cost of beer! Hardly a vote-getter.



DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

The way Diefenderfer describes it, Packwood was barred from getting at any other source of revenue. "The thing we didn't want to do is raise the rates," he says. That would annoy Reagan. "Second, we knew we had some people who would support us—the Mothers Against Drunk Driving types, the anti-smoking types." The anti-smoking lobby has complained for years about the deductibility of the excise tax on cigarettes, arguing that the 16-cent per pack levy really costs the tobacco industry only half that. "And third," says Diefenderfer, "we couldn't get a straight excise tax increase past the president."

Of course, Packwood could have rejected some of the requests for tax favors. But that might jeopardize getting any bill through the committee, which would tarnish his reputation as a leader. Even if he'd wanted legislation along real reform lines, he probably couldn't get it. The committee is just inhospitable to the idea of tax reform. Only three members—Bill Bradley of New Jersey, Chafee of Rhode Island, and George Mitchell of Maine—are committed to it. On a private vote, says Diefenderfer, the other 17, including Packwood, would probably vote against reform legislation.

They won't have to. The bill that emerges in May will have hardly any reform elements. Packwood has taken care of that, and where he hasn't, the committee has overridden him. He made sure that tax breaks for the timber industry, important in Oregon, were retained. Neither Reagan's own tax proposal nor the House-passed bill is as lucrative for timber barons. And Packwood also kept the write-offs for mining, oil, and gas. "His strategy is to get Russell Long [of Louisiana] and Lloyd Bentsen [of Texas] and, to a lesser extent, David Boren [of Oklahoma]," says Bradley. To get them, you have to give big tax breaks to the oil and gas industry.

Packwood's relationship with Long, the former Finance chairman who is retiring this year after 38 years in the Senate, is an interesting one. When the committee gathered in Berkeley Springs, West Virginia, for a retreat last year, Packwood described how he first learned about Long. At the time, Packwood was a high school senior assigned to write a paper on a national legislator. He picked Long, figuring that he could get away with a short paper because Long was then a young, inexperienced senator. A friendship blossomed. "You ignore Long at your own peril," says Diefenderfer. "Packwood loves Long. He'd never, ever, try to roll over him. He may eventually have to beat him on a vote. But he'd never bulldozer him." This is another way of saying that the tax bill won't be a reform bill. Appeasement of Long and tax reform are mutually exclusive.

Who else was appeased? John Danforth of Missouri, for one. After he'd drafted his bill in March, Packwood scheduled two days of private meetings with committee members. From senators who'd talked to Packwood the first day, Danforth had learned the bill would eliminate the "completed contract" form of accounting, which lets defense contractors (such as McDonnell Douglas and General Dynamics of St. Louis) postpone declaring income until a project is completed, while deducting the expenses as they go along. Danforth lobbied aggressively to retain the write-off, and Packwood relented. The chairman also gave in to Daniel Patrick Moynihan of New York. A former Harvard professor, Moynihan pleaded with him to keep the tax-free status of annuities sold to college professors by a nonprofit association, even though the same annuity sold by a private company would be taxable. Packwood acceded. He also agreed to continue the limited tax liability for university faculty housing.

Where Packwood wouldn't accommodate, the committee would. Lobbyists for heavy industry were upset over his refusal to revive the investment tax credit, which favored their clients. They devised an alternative called

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"productivity property," under which the write-offs for assets used in manufacturing can be taken quickly. Bradley led the opposition to this, pointing out that it allows a faster write-off on a truck used to transport baseball gloves or jewelry than on a truck carrying food. Mindlessly favored tax treatment, in other words. But the committee approved it 12 to eight, and Packwood voted yes.

Under Packwood's direction, the committee was adding an average of two billion dollars in new tax benefits to the bill every day. At that rate, there will be $30 billion or more to make up in lost revenue when the day of reckoning for the committee comes in May. And that assumes Packwood's excise tax scheme will pass muster, which it won't. More than half the committee members have expressed opposition, which means as much as $75 billion more will have to be raised. Raising it won't be easy without boosting rates and further eroding what reform elements remain. "We've got a lot of guys who want to raise rates," says Diefenderfer. "That's a pressure we've got to fight." But resisting pressure isn't Packwood's forte. He's better at buckling under.

FRED BARNES

If they discovered a vaccine tomorrow . . .

AIDS AND LAWYERS

THERE WERE encouraging reports last month that scientists are making great progress in developing a vaccine against AIDS. Unfortunately, under present legal conditions, even if such a vaccine were available tomorrow, no one would produce it.

Suppose the research and development department at the Mammoth Drug Company *does* come up with an AIDS vaccine. The scientists test it on monkeys and rats, and it works. The microbiologists say it's a sure bet to work on humans too. What next? To start with, a lengthy review of the record by the Food and Drug Administration. Then tightly supervised human testing in limited populations. Federal law is clear: drugs are not allowed on the market until they are proven not merely "safe," but "effective" as well. The same testing is required whether the drug treats AIDS or acne. The earliest conceivable FDA approval is two years down the line.

And probably a lot longer. There's a good chance the new vaccine—like many of the old ones used against other diseases—will be a living (but weakened) virus. This crippled AIDS virus almost certainly will have been developed by genetic engineering. And today's regulators are deeply nervous about gene-altered organisms. Any kind of testing outside a triply secure lab will require interminable advance review. The Agriculture Department recently prompted a front-page controversy after it cut some corners in approving a gene-modified vaccine for a pseudorabies that is deadly to swine. Approving a genetically altered bug that looks a lot like the AIDS virus will lead to a much bigger fuss.

But maybe Washington would throw out the rule book for something as politically urgent as AIDS. Assume an AIDS vaccine could get prompt blessing. Next step: manufacture. But most vaccines have side effects of some type or another. Remember swine flu? The vaccine against the disease turned out to cause Guillain-Barre syndrome in some who received it. Whooping cough? The pertussis vaccine occasionally causes death or serious brain damage. Sabin polio vaccine? Responsible for an occasional case of polio. The benefit of taking all these vaccines far outweighs the tiny risk of side effects. But for those very few who lose the gamble, the temptation to sue is overwhelming.

Of course, the FDA testing might uncover the AIDS-vaccine side effects before Mammoth goes to market. But then again, it might not. FDA tests will be carried to the point where everyone is sure that the vaccine cures more disease than it causes. But that's about all that a limited test of 2,000 persons can ever tell you. There's no way the FDA can nail down the one-in-a-million human side effect without actually vaccinating a million people. Even if the FDA discovers a side effect, this doesn't mean that the vaccine won't—or shouldn't—be produced. It just means that manufacturers will be able to warn people of the possible side effect before they take the vaccine, which may provide some legal protection. But there can be no warning against side effects that are unknown.

AND WHAT ARE the occasional side effects of the AIDS vaccine likely to be if they do materialize after mass inoculations? Impossible to say. But there's a fair chance that for the tiniest fraction of those vaccinated the side effect will be AIDS itself, or something equally horrible. Hearing this, the general counsel at Mammoth Drug may have a stroke. He's been spending a lot of time in court recently, defending vaccine lawsuits, and without much success. He knows, for example, that a polio victim in Kansas successfully sued American Cyanamid for ten million dollars in 1984. The vaccine was fine, made just as the FDA requires. But one unlucky recipient suffered the side effects that neither the FDA nor Mammoth knows how to eliminate, and a jury was feeling generous. It happens. In the case of vaccines, it happens often.

Even if the risks from the vaccine are very small—much smaller than the risks from AIDS itself—the financial stakes are huge. Weird and unexpected things happen in drug litigation. Look what happened with the swine flu vaccine. All those who contracted Guillain-Barre syndrome within two months of receiving the vaccine were compensated for their illnesses, even though as many as half of the cases were not caused by the vaccine.

Suppose the AIDS vaccine is perfectly safe for most people, but causes allergic reactions in those who have already been exposed to AIDS. Mammoth could end up

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paying dearly, even if it warns everyone of the risk. Somewhere, somehow, the wrong person will still get vaccinated. Or even more likely, the *right* person will be vaccinated: someone for whom the one-in-a-million side effect is clearly a risk worth taking (just as taking the polio vaccine is well worth the infinitesimal risk today). But then the side effect will strike, and the victim will claim he wasn't sufficiently warned. Faced with a sympathetic victim, a jury can be adept at rereading the fine print of a warning and finding it inadequate. If the new AIDS vaccine gets out there on the market, scratched into the arms of millions of people, and it turns out to have *any* side effects to speak of, Mammoth could go under.

Mammoth's general counsel does not plan to preside over the bankruptcy-court dismantling of his corporate empire. Remember Johns-Manville and asbestos? A. H. Robbins and the Dalkon Shield? Those firms may indeed have been negligent, but that's small comfort to the Mammoth general counsel. He will remind the Mammoth board of directors that negligence is always easier to find in hindsight. No doubt he will also remind them that Wyeth Laboratories halted manufacture of the whooping cough vaccine in 1984, citing dramatic increases in insurance and litigation costs. Dozens of other companies have left the vaccine market in the last 15 years for similar reasons.

The lawsuits that are driving companies out of the vaccine business generally don't even allege negligence in manufacture. They usually turn on arguments about how the warning on the package was phrased, or on fancy theories of liability without fault. Any theory will do, if it might get a case to the jury. Knowing this, nervous companies settle—and then get out of the vaccine business.

OUR Mammoth Drug Company can't buy comprehensive insurance for any vaccine marketing, and neither can anyone else. Why not? The general counsel at Colossal Insurance doesn't care for bankruptcy any more than her brother at Mammoth. Selfish, but a very real fact of today's marketplace. This fact was made clear ten years ago, during the swine flu scare. Congress rushed through some emergency legislation, assuming responsibility for the vaccine's side effects (which were pinned down well after the program got under way). The pharmaceutical companies were required to sell the vaccine at cost, realizing not a penny of profit. The Justice Department spent the next ten years dealing with millions in liability claims. They're still digging out.

Of course, Congress might well get around to raising the legislative umbrella over the new AIDS vaccine too. There's already a bill before the California legislature designed to guarantee the purchase of an AIDS vaccine, and protect its manufacturer from liability. But it's only a bill, and only in one state. And if Mammoth has to rely on this, or on the federal swine flu model, the profit in its AIDS vaccine will be unimpressive.

So what exactly does Mammoth have to gain from pushing its AIDS research? The corporate research scientists are terribly excited, of course—there's probably a Nobel Prize waiting out there. The PR people would love to draft the new ads for the evening news: "Mammoth Drug: People to the Aid of People." And there might be some money to be made on the vaccine in Europe and Canada. The Rock Hudsons of the world could undoubtedly pay a premium to get the vaccine overseas. All of this might be enough to keep a modest amount of research going. But research microbiologists come very expensive these days—not to mention the equipment and laboratories they need. Testing to satisfy the FDA is expensive too. Even if there are still potential profits, a few lawsuits could swallow them all. But all in all, these are slim pickings. Better for Mammoth to send most of the R&D boys back to the mass-market nasal sprays.

PETER HUBER

Peter Huber is a Washington attorney.

Profiting off the national debt.

DEFICIT JOYRIDERS

WELCOME TO THE topsy-turvy world of the Wall Street government-bond dealers, the people who are getting rich off the national debt. This is the never-never land where bad news is good news and good news is usually terrible news. President Reagan and Congress continue pledging to reduce the deficit. But what's the hurry? The bigger the deficit, the bigger the profits.

To see the deficit from a bond trader's perspective, think of it as a commodity, a raw material that consists of antimatter, a product that is the absence of something. Bond prices rise as demand to hold that antimatter rises. Antimatter usually is most attractive when things in the real world aren't going so well. When the Commerce Department announces that thousands of workers were thrown out of manufacturing jobs in the previous month, bond prices go up. When retail stores report lousy sales for December because millions of people can't afford to buy Christmas presents, the bond market takes heart. The best news of all is an impending recession. A faltering economy means inflation isn't likely to gnaw away at the interest the government pays investors, so they're willing to buy bonds that pay a lower interest rate. Since the interest payment on a government bond is fixed the day it is issued, what varies is the price of the bond. When interest rates go down, the value of every bond already in existence goes up. It's an easy mathematical exercise; there are even special bond pocket calculators that will do it for you.

Bumper crops of more tangible commodities like eggs and milk result in lower prices. The same logic ought to apply to the antimatter called government debt: bigger

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deficits should mean higher interest rates, meaning lower bond prices. But bumper crops of government debt in the Reagan era haven't decreased bond prices. In fact, the opposite has occurred. Bond dealers have been enjoying the best of both worlds: rising prices and endless supply. For years long-term government bonds (or "govies," as they are called in the business) were cheap, since nobody wanted to risk getting stuck with, say, bonds paying 12 percent or 14 percent when inflation and debt were supposed to push interest rates back up to 20 percent. But inflation cooled, 12 percent looked good, and all of a sudden Wall Street found itself sitting on top of a hot financial product: good old-fashioned "govies."

Every three months the Treasury Department holds a bond auction to raise money to pay the government's bills. (These are new bonds, as opposed to the trading of old ones.) Since 1979 the bond auctions have grown from nine billion dollars to $23 billion. All of this new supply hasn't caused a glut. Bond dealers were originally afraid that nobody would want to buy this stuff, but U.S. and Japanese insurance companies and pension funds can't seem to get enough of it. Indeed, to fill the financing gap, the Treasury in the late 1970s began selling five- and seven-year notes, securities that had never existed previously. These notes are sold in between the quarterly auctions to keep money flowing to the government and raise $17 billion every three months or so.

LAST FALL THE market even experienced its own version of a brief OPEC oil embargo when Congress dillydallied over raising the debt ceiling. The Treasury slowed the production of U.S. government securities, and bonds became scarce. Investors lined up, and prices soared. When the debt began to flow again ($27 billion in nine days), Gramm-Rudman noises from Washington about reducing the deficit caused another flurry of buying. When real oil prices started tumbling, bonds were even more irresistible. Lower rates launched the stock market rally, and ever since we've been treated to edge-of-your-seat episodes of Louis Rukeyser's "Wall Street Week."

All in all, long-term interest rates have fallen 4.25 percent since a year ago. In the arithmetic of the bond world, that means a staggering price increase. Each one-hundredth of a percent drop in rates constitutes a price increase of about $1,000 for each million dollars' worth of 30-year bonds, and the government has issued over $25 billion of such "long bonds." From Wall Street's vantage point, Reagan couldn't have picked a better time to bloat the deficit and summon the Treasury to churn out bonds like a Japanese factory working overtime to meet a quota.

Making huge profits financing the federal debt isn't all that complicated. In a way what bond dealers do is no different from what an egg broker does: the more eggs, the bigger the business. And the faster the inventory changes hands, the more chances the dealer has to turn a profit. In recent years, bond trading has increased about sevenfold. And dealers don't simply have more to trade—they trade more often, trying to take advantage of the slightest fluctuation in interest rates. Ideally, they "buy the dips," when bad news (like a surge in housing starts or a government estimate of healthy GNP) causes "a back-up in yield." When some really good news comes in, like a report in March that General Motors would be closing several assembly plants, prices "spike" for a few hours, and traders sell to take profits.

TRADERS MAKE MONEY whether interest rates go up or down as long as there are buyers and sellers. The worst thing is a period of stable interest rates. That's when the market is "locked into a narrow trading range," and everyone waits to see what the next guy is going to do. On those days "inventories get stale," there's no money to be made, and traders have trouble staying awake. But over the past year, with interest rates following a steep but wobbly descent—remember, falling interest rates mean rising bond prices—traders are no more likely to lose sleep trying to count all the money they're making. A good trader should make a minimum of $400,000 this year, and many will make more than one million dollars. Some of that loot will probably go to paying doctors' bills. Along with the profits, traders get more than their share of ulcers and heart attacks. That's because prices can move so erratically from hour to hour. A trader may find himself holding millions of dollars' worth of bonds that have suddenly dropped in price. If a big institutional customer needs to buy a few hundred million dollars' worth of bonds at that instant, the trader must sell his inventories when they are "underwater" and takes a big "hit."

Bond dealers are secretive, and bond trading profits are not separated out in their financial reports. But one dealer, Discount Corporation of America, deals almost exclusively in government bonds and is publicly owned. Discount's trading profits work as a rough proxy of how the dealers as a group are doing. For 1985 Discount reported net profits on trading operations at $65 million, compared to $67 million in 1984, when interest rates dropped sharply in the second half of the year, particularly in short-term debt in which Discount specializes. Discount enjoyed its best year ever in 1982, with net trading profits of $73 million. That, you'll recall, was the year the economy suffered its worst downturn since the Depression. Nineteen-eighty-three was a lean year for Discount. The economy began to rebound, interest rates edged slowly higher, and Discount made just $26 million in trading.

When Discount makes tens of millions, big dealers such as Merrill Lynch, First Boston, and Salomon Brothers probably make hundreds of millions. What's more, since long-term interest rates have been dropping much faster than short-term rates over the past year, the firms that concentrate their trading in the longer maturities have been pulling in fistfuls of money. That's true not only because rates have fallen more in long-term bonds, but also because of the greater price volatility of long-term debt. At today's rates, if you own $100 million worth of 30-year bonds, and interest rates drop a mere .07 percent, the value of your bonds increases by one million dollars. The same

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drop when applied to $100 million of two-year notes would make you only $128,000 richer. This is because you're going to enjoy your new .2 percent advantage for a shorter period of time before the bond is paid off.

THERE ARE 36 "primary dealers" in the elite group of brokerage houses and banks, such as Salomon Brothers, Shearson-Lehman Brothers, and Citibank, that help the Treasury issue new bonds as well as trade old ones. The new bonds replace the old ones that have come due as well as finance the current deficit. Wall Street dealers bid for billions in new debt in a sort of electronic poker match played out on telephones and video screens. The highest bidder wins the most bonds. The next step is to unload "inventories" for a profit by selling them into the "secondary market"—smaller dealers and big institutional investors who absorb the bulk of the debt.

The primary dealer community, as the 36 members often refer to themselves, is definitely a private club. Sure, there's tough competition within the fold, but all enjoy the status and privileges of close ties to the Treasury and the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. Representatives from the dealers meet regularly with officials at the Treasury to discuss marketing strategy. As the Treasury's main distribution network, primary dealers are a kind of oligopoly, forcing smaller dealers to come to them for bonds and attracting big institutional customers who want the best price for bulk orders.

Now that the business of recycling the national debt is thriving, a throng of newcomers is knocking on the door, asking to be admitted into the inner sanctum. At least a dozen are going through the moves, demonstrating to the Federal Reserve Bank their abilities to bid aggressively in Treasury auctions and "make markets" in U.S. debt, including four large Japanese dealers who have raided U.S. dealers of some of their highest paid traders. The Japanese, who import our debt with the same gusto that we import their VCRs, are finding it makes much more sense to compete directly with U.S. dealers rather than simply rely on them as suppliers.

There are other telltale signs that business is booming. Salomon Brothers paid $2.6 million last year to Thomas Strauss, who is responsible for Salomon's government securities business. That's equal to the fee Salomon paid to economics guru Henry Kaufman and a handful of other Salomon partners, and second only to the $3.1 million paid to chairman John Gutfreund. Brokerage houses and banks now employ staff economists who are paid solely to tell traders whether interest rates should go down or up on a particular day, based on what sort of "noise" (good and bad news) is expected from the government statistical mills. These are also the economists who devote themselves to "Fed watching," speculating on what the latest wrinkle etched in Paul Volcker's forehead may portend for short-term interest rates.

There's nothing wrong with the way Wall Street profits from the deficit. Wall Street didn't invent the deficit—Washington did. Without Wall Street, there could be no such thing as deficit spending, and all that it buys. Dealers are providing the federal government with an indispensable service, and taking a piece of the action. And the bounty that government bond dealers are enjoying right now is just one part of the general Wall Street boom spurred by falling interest rates. Still, it's a marvel that financing the federal debt is not only managed smoothly, but has been turned into a profitable business for professional gamblers. It allows them to build personal fortunes, buy summer houses in the Hamptons, and pay for their kids' private schools while the country goes deeper and deeper into hock.

ERIC SCHINE

Eric Schine is a New York writer.

How to kill a foreign policy.

DOCTRINE OVERDOSE

WHEN IT COMES to foreign policy, Americans dearly love a doctrine. For over 100 years the Monroe Doctrine provided the centerpiece of American policy. After World War II, the Truman Doctrine encapsulated the revolution in that policy. More recently, no president has seemed complete without one. So it is entirely in character that, as a serious foreign policy debate has finally gotten under way in the Reagan era—fueled by the Philippines crisis and the question of aid to the *contras* in Nicaragua—it has turned on the merits of a doctrine.

Neither the president nor any senior member of the administration has formally proclaimed or recognized the existence of such a thing as a Reagan Doctrine. The notion came about because a few commentators (starting with Charles Krauthammer) extracted passages from presidential statements, claimed for them a special centrality and authority as explanations of administration policy, labeled them a doctrine, and got the claim and label to stick.

This represents a considerable triumph, for the advantages of the doctrinal form are substantial. A doctrine simplifies and makes accessible what was arcane and complex. By relating a range of particular issues to general principles and values, it provides—or at least promises—coherence, consistency, and order where previously there was confusion. It has the dramatic impact that goes with a firm declaration of purpose. And as the current debate shows, it largely determines the terms in which issues are perceived and discussed.

Once successfully launched, a doctrine can perform functions that are extremely useful to its adherents. It can be a powerful instrument for engaging attention and mobilizing popular support. It can make it more difficult for

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bureaucracies to procrastinate or to run foreign policies of their own. It can be used to keep the administration honest, by making it difficult to renege on commitments that have been given a special authority and solemnity. Witness the successful pressure brought to bear on the Reagan administration to aid guerrilla leader Jonas Savimbi in Angola, in which a key argument was that failure to do so would make nonsense of the doctrine. As the Monroe and Truman doctrines demonstrated in their time, a doctrine can convey important messages to other governments.

DO DOCTRINES HAVE serious political drawbacks as well as these virtues? William Graham Sumner, the 19th-century American sociologist, thought so. "Doctrines," he claimed, "are the most frightful tyrants to which men ever are subject, because doctrines get inside a man's own reason and betray him against himself." This is rather overheated, more applicable to messianic ideologies than mere doctrines. But Sumner has a point, one that can be stated more simply and modestly: doctrines tend to make one doctrinaire.

First, by their nature they deal in broad categories and general principles, sacrificing particularity and circumstance for the sake of comprehensiveness and impact. What Napoleon said about constitutions—that they should be short and vague—also holds for doctrines. Is the administration's recent endorsement of aid to democratic "third forces" against right-wing dictatorships part of the Reagan Doctrine, a corollary to it, or a different doctrine entirely? Build in too many elaborations, refinements, and qualifications, and you violate the form. The more sophisticated exponents of the Reagan Doctrine—e.g., the editors of THE NEW REPUBLIC—are already close to the edge in this respect. As they strive to get it right and cover their flanks, left and right, they are in danger of converting a doctrine into a complex policy. Doctrines are strong on connections but weak on distinctions. They tend to lump together what both precision and prudence dictate should be treated separately.

Second, doctrines tend to be fixated on goals. They pay more attention to the definition and justification of ends than to the appropriateness of means, the allocation of priorities, and the best use of scarce resources. On the face of it, the Reagan Doctrine, with its stress on aid to anticommunist guerrilla movements, may seem to contradict this. But not really. There is little evidence of serious thinking about what each of these movements can or cannot be expected to do, what quality and kind of aid each needs, what should be the priorities of each of the different movements, whether the United States is politically capable of sustaining what it starts, and what happens in each case if the resistance to the communist regime fails. (Those who want aid to "third forces" against right-wing dictatorships included in the Reagan Doctrine have shown no evidence of serious thought about means.)

Third, doctrines present themselves as package deals. You are expected to buy or reject the lot. A doctrine has a binding (and driving) "logic," and that's really what is on sale. Once bought, this logic is likely to take over and to commit one to more than one originally intended. The real world and its complexity recede. This clearly seems to have happened in the case of the Reagan Doctrine. For the sake of consistency and credibility, what was once meant to apply to a few countries on the periphery of the Soviet empire has now been extended to cover dozens of countries ruled by either left- or right-wing authoritarian governments in which it can be plausibly claimed that there are democratic "third forces."

Adherents of this extended form of doctrine will contest the words "plausibly claimed," but they are defensible. When we are talking about countries with no, or very thin, traditions of democratic government, anything approaching certainty is unavailable. And it is worth remembering that this is not the first time we have been around this block. In the years immediately following World War II, Americans enthusiastically pressed for the rapid dismantling of European empires, in the name of self-determination and democracy. The result was the Third World we know today: 120 or so countries, out of which the genuine stable democracies can be counted on the fingers of one hand, and in which corruption and repression are pervasive. Doctrinal "logic" demands a renewed attempt to create democracy from a distance. Yet recent historical experience, as well as respect for the enormous variation of political culture that exists in countries as diverse as Chile, South Korea, Pakistan, and South Africa (to take a few of those offered as suitable candidates for "third force" treatment), suggests that a healthy respect for the limits of American power is appropriate.

Moreover, American power has declined significantly since the first time around, and the objects of American pressure would not be demoralized imperialists but Third World elites with everything to lose. One of the most dangerous and irresponsible conclusions to draw from recent events in Manila is that, in the face of "people power," the tanks will not roll. More often than not they will.

The characteristics that make doctrines attractive to intellectuals also make them at best dubious and at worst dangerous guides for those who actually have to make policy. Despite some reservations, I started off as someone who welcomed the proclaiming of the Reagan Doctrine, because I believed that, subject to circumstances and a consideration of wider American interests, it was sensible and proper to aid the anticommunist resistance movements in Nicaragua, Angola, Afghanistan, and Cambodia. I also believed it highly desirable to restore purpose and coherence to American foreign policy. I still hold these beliefs, and certainly continue to support the main thrust of Reagan's foreign policy. But I am no longer confident that the Reagan Doctrine, as it has developed, is an effective vehicle for furthering these aims.

Stop the doctrine, I want to get off.

OWEN HARRIES

Owen Harries is the editor of the *National Interest*.

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The women's movement looks beyond 'equality.'

WHAT NOW?

BY DOROTHY WICKENDEN

NOBODY SEEMS TO have a kind word for the women's movement these days. Its leaders are suffering from "post-feminist depression." It has reached a state of "profound paralysis." Its largest and strongest proponent, the National Organization for Women, has shown itself to be nothing more than a "colorless liberal organization." American women "have less economic security than their mothers did, and are considerably worse off than women in other advanced countries." Only the first of these assessments is from a conservative ideologue—Dinesh D'Souza, in an article called "The New Feminist Revolt: This Time It's Against Feminism." The second is from NOW's founder, Betty Friedan, whose advice on "How to Get the Women's Movement Moving Again" was prefaced by a stern critique of its current strategies; the third is from a radical feminist, Brett Harvey; and the fourth is from an economist, Sylvia Ann Hewlett, whose new book, *A Lesser Life: The Myth of Women's Liberation in America*, is a withering examination of the failures of contemporary feminism.

Meanwhile, there have been cries of betrayal within NOW. Last July the press relished a ruthless battle for NOW's presidency between the incumbent, Judy Goldsmith, and her predecessor, Eleanor Smeal. Behind the personal feud was a significant disagreement over tactics. The "moderate" Goldsmith charged Smeal with "character assassination" and "a ward boss mentality." She called Smeal's relentless pursuit of the Equal Rights Amendment "an exercise in futility." She pleaded for coalition-building and expanding NOW's agenda. The "militant" Smeal accused Goldsmith of abandoning the ERA, losing NOW members, and becoming a mere "arm of the Democratic Party." She talked of revolution. "We don't take our right-wing fascist opponents seriously enough," she scolded the delegates at the convention in New Orleans. "We must recognize bigotry when it raises its ugly head. We must wrap it around the neck of the right wing." Smeal defeated Goldsmith. And, as promised, she took women back to the streets with a rousing national march for abortion rights and birth control. Eighty thousand people showed up for the March 9 demonstration in Washington, representing groups ranging from Baby Boomers for Choice to Lesbian and Gay Quakers.

Fractiousness among feminists and dour predictions of the movement's imminent collapse are nothing new. Ten years ago, when the radical revolt against liberal feminism was at its peak, Veronica Geng wrote off NOW in an article for *Harper's* called "Requiem for the Women's Movement." NOW, she said, "tried to refute a male fantasy with another male fantasy: see Betty's wholesome family, see Gloria's beauty, see Marlene's fulfilling job, see our docile masses, who all think the same reasonable thoughts. As it turned out, this strategy played a large part in creating the worst possible image: that of an unwelcoming movement, closed to dissent." Over half a century ago—when traditionalists were claiming that expanding women's lives beyond the domestic realm would lead to effeminacy among men and insanity among women—suffragists were divided among themselves over strategy. And while suffragists proclaimed that the women's vote would usher in an era of enlightened social reform, other feminists warned that it would do nothing to improve the lot of women who needed it most: the working class and poor. The current debate is only the latest expression of a century-old split among feminist forces about how to revolutionize the role of women in American society.

Much of this dissension has grown out of a flaw at the heart of mainstream feminist theory, which has both exaggerated the potential for political unity among women and slighted the significance of biological distinctions between the sexes. The premise of "equal rights" feminism is that social, legal, and economic equality must be pursued in defiance of gender differences. By contrast, social feminists, radical feminists, and others have always been dubious about the wisdom of aspiring to standards of public and private life established by and for men. At the turn of the century Charlotte Perkins Gilman argued not only that women had the right to employment, but that society would have to find a way to make it possible to balance the demands of child-rearing and work. Today even women who fought most vigorously for equal rights are finding the approach increasingly problematic. Yet the voices of dissent are not urging a recantation of feminism. They urge a new definition of equal opportunity—one that will be almost as unsettling to NOW as to Reaganites. As Betty Friedan put it in *The Second Stage* (1981): "The equality we fought for isn't livable, isn't workable, isn't comfortable in the terms that structured our battle."

That battle was largely shaped, of course, by Friedan herself and the National Organization for Women. She and a dozen or so other activists established NOW in 1966 after concluding that the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which banned job discrimination on the grounds of sex as well as race, religion, and national origin, would not be enough to prod government agencies to act on complaints of sex discrimi-

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nation. NOW's intention never was to subvert male bastions of power, but to work through the legislatures, Congress, courts, and grass-roots organizations to enable women to work alongside men in education, employment, and politics.

The successes of the egalitarian tradition of feminism—from the 19th Amendment in 1920 to *Roe v. Wade* in 1973—have been considerable. The women's movement has knocked down sex discrimination in higher education and Olympic sports, in credit applications and the English language. It has shaped policy in the professions and politics, reconstituted relations between the sexes, and dramatically altered the terms of debate within the Catholic Church. Nevertheless, its limitations are clearer than ever. The issues that feminists historically have rallied around—the Equal Rights Amendment and reproductive freedom—arguably have helped to marshal reactionary forces as much as to mobilize women. The reason is obvious. Women bear children, a fact that cannot be transformed by legislation or swept away with rhetoric. A politics built upon the right to control childbearing and the denial of sexual differences is dangerously vulnerable when it comes to one of the most fiercely guarded institutions of American society: the family.

THIS WEAKNESS has been exposed in two critical political battles over the ERA. In 1923, when the ERA was first proposed by Alice Paul's National Women's Party, it aroused deep disagreements among women over promised public freedoms and existing private responsibilities. Many feminists, including Eleanor Roosevelt and groups such as the National League of Women Voters, the Women's Trade Union League, and the Council of Jewish Women, actively opposed the ERA, arguing that women's needs are different from men's, and that it would deprive women of the few social supports they had. Far from uniting women along the lines of gender, the ERA divided them along the lines of class. In *Women and Equality* (1977), William H. Chafe describes the strategy of the National Women's Party. He could almost be describing NOW's strategy in the 1970s:

> . . . the NWP devoted its entire energies to the fight for an ERA, eschewing identification with other questions such as birth control or maternal and infant care. . . . in the process . . . the NWP, already a small elitist organization, alienated most working women (the ERA prior to 1941 would have brought invalidation of protective legislation for working women such as minimum-wage laws), spent an excessive amount of energy battling other women's organizations, and tended to ignore the extent to which the roots of sex inequality went beyond the reach of even the most powerful constitutional amendment.

In the 1970s the ERA became a cause not only for women demanding their full legal rights as American citizens, but also for the conservatives' "pro-family" agenda. The final ratification drive gave Phyllis Schlafly and the burgeoning Moral Majority (not to mention the John Birch Society) a platform from which to blame feminism for robbing women of their livelihood, releasing dangerous male sexual urges, destroying the family, and murdering the unborn. This hysterical response caught feminists off guard. Schlafly's STOP ERA campaign was largely a reaction to the counterculture, yet the ERA campaign was in part an effort by the moderate women's movement to shake off the vague revolutionism of radical feminism. Smeal and Goldsmith say that in the end it wasn't Schlafly that killed the ERA, but the obstructionist tactics of a handful of legislators and lobbyists in a few conservative states. There are, though, less visible lessons of the ERA's defeat, which NOW still refuses to recognize. The first is the political delicacy (and the unintended consequences) of any move to amend the Constitution. The second is that even many supporters of the ERA were skeptical about its potential for bringing about a more egalitarian society. The third is that investing too heavily in a single approach to women's rights can be foolhardy.

TODAY Eleanor Smeal stubbornly insists that the best way to revive the women's movement is to renew the ERA campaign and undercut the right on the issues of birth control, abortion, and pay equity. "There is no liberty for women," she told me, "if they can't control their own fertility." In a recent speech to Catholic University students, she took up this theme with fervor, stressing the urgency of retaining women's right to birth control in this country, and pressing for it in Africa. After her talk, when a Hispanic woman rose to ask why minorities had the impression that NOW sometimes seems oblivious to their concerns, Smeal replied indignantly, "The opposition is primarily male. That's a fact. . . . You should be proud of the fight women have waged."

To be sure, it is thanks to the organized women's movement that a majority of American women now take for granted the right to control their own fertility. And professional women are reaping the rewards of the efforts of NOW, the Women's Equity Action League, the National Women's Political Caucus, and numerous other groups. College graduates are routinely postponing marriage and pursuing careers in fields that used to be virtually closed to women: law, medicine, engineering, banking. And women are getting elected to political office in unprecedented numbers. Fourteen years ago there were 362 female state legislators; today there are 1,103. So far 19 women have announced plans to run for governor in 1986. Yet NOW and its sister organizations have been unable to shake the charge of elitism. In particular, they are accused of benignly neglecting what has become the most intractable "women's issue": the worsening economic plight of millions of American women and their children.

Thus while Smeal continues to warn her audiences of creeping fundamentalism, women from outside the NOW camp are warning of the pitfalls of egalitarian feminism. Some (who emphasize that they fully support the pro-choice cause) complain that in effect the most powerful groups have been pursuing a kind of trickle-down feminism: open up opportunities in mayoralties and state legislatures and the U.S. Congress, in higher education and the

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professions, and eventually all women will benefit. Julia Scott at the Children's Defense Fund says that in the long fight for the ERA, "the fight to help support the working class and poor was dropped." Eleanor Guggenheimer, at the Child Care Action Campaign, says that the ERA proved to be such a tremendous fund-raising success that NOW lost sight of the immediate worries of many women: how to care for their children while meeting the demands of their jobs. "You ask women how they feel about the family, and the floodgates open. They will tell you it's unbelievably difficult to find day care. Divorced women will tell you their fears of taking another day off when their child is sick—they're scared to death of being fired. They worry about keeping food on the table."

The fact is that millions of American women aren't doing well at all. There is still a large discrepancy between male and female wages. (According to the U.S. Census Bureau, women who work full-time still earn on average only 61 cents to every dollar paid to men.) Working women still cluster in low-paying, sex-segregated jobs in the "pink-collar ghetto." And female poverty gets worse all the time. Three out of five adults officially designated as below the poverty line are women, and close to half of the poor families in America are headed by women. Minority women and their children are the most disadvantaged group in America: two-thirds of the children in black and Hispanic female-headed households are poor. All of these trends have been exacerbated by the Reagan counter-revolution. While talking about the sanctity of family life, the right has whittled away social programs that serve primarily the families of poor and working women: AFDC, child nutrition, food stamps, day care.

THE BIGGEST challenge for women's organizations is no longer simply to expand equal opportunities, or even to fight the Reagan administration on affirmative action and social issues. The most critical and difficult work lies in finding ways to help women maintain a decent standard of living without neglecting their children. The traditional approach to equality has proved inadequate here. Women, like minority groups, have discovered that discrimination is not the only significant barrier to economic advancement, and that equal rights and even ostensibly equal treatment do not necessarily lead to true equality.

In some cases the sex-blind pursuit of equal rights has even exacerbated social and economic injustices. The reforms in divorce law, for example, which set out to ensure equal treatment for men and women, have instead helped men at women's expense, as Lenore Weitzman shows in *The Divorce Revolution.* (See "Cruel Contracts" by Maggie Scarf, TNR, April 21.) Although Smeal says that she and other feminists had reservations about the equitable divorce laws all along, the principle behind them is precisely that principle of equality supported by NOW. "No-fault attempts to treat men and women equally—*or as if they were equal*—at the point of divorce," Weitzman says. "However, it ignores the *structural* inequality between men and women in the larger society." Under the new system, judges rarely acknowledge the economic vulnerability of women who have spent years raising their children. Instead, they assume that the real barrier to self-sufficiency is the woman's reluctance to go out and get a job. Permanent alimony—which was always rare (in 1968, for example, under 20 percent of divorced wives in California were awarded alimony)—is now virtually nonexistent, and by 1978 only 13 percent of mothers with children under six were awarded even temporary alimony. What's more, although the vast majority of divorced women continue to care for their children, child support is grossly inadequate, and between 60 and 80 percent of fathers refuse to comply with court-ordered payments. Not surprisingly, within the first year of divorce, women and their children experience a 73 percent drop in their standard of living, and men a 42 percent rise.

IN THE WORKPLACE, too, a doctrinaire adherence to the ideal of equality has proved troublesome. The women's movement, along with numerous civil rights and labor groups and the Democratic Party, believes that the way to correct the disparities between men's and women's work and wages is through comparable worth, or "pay equity," as it is now called. The proponents of pay equity have made Americans aware of the dismal facts about job segregation and its threat to women's economic well-being, and by now most states either have introduced or are considering pay-equity plans. They have been less successful in analyzing and attacking the underlying sources of the wage gap.

Pay-equity enthusiasts assume that long-standing patterns of sexual discrimination are the principal reason that women continue to be underpaid and segregated in "women's work." They tend to downplay women's other handicaps, such as less education and job training and fewer years in the work force. They largely overlook sweeping socioeconomic changes of the last decade—such as deindustrialization and the rise of service industries—which also shape employment patterns. And they often fail to take account of women's continuing responsibilities at home.

The dangers of a single-minded focus on discrimination as the cause of women's low status and low pay on the job suddenly became evident when the long discrimination case against Sears Roebuck & Company was lost. In 1979 the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission filed suit, charging Sears with sex discrimination in hiring, promotion, and pay. But the court found that not only had Sears met reasonable standards for hiring women; its record on affirmative action was commendable. It was the first big retail chain in the country to adopt an affirmative action plan. Moreover, the EEOC never came forth with a witness who could convincingly testify to discrimination. The judge criticized the statistical evidence presented by the EEOC showing the paucity of women in commission sales jobs, and said that women had proved to be both less interested in and less qualified for those jobs. NOW and

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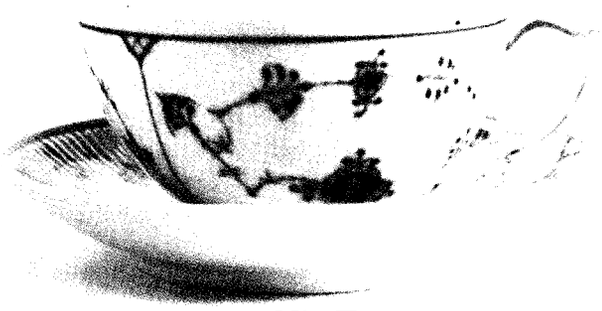
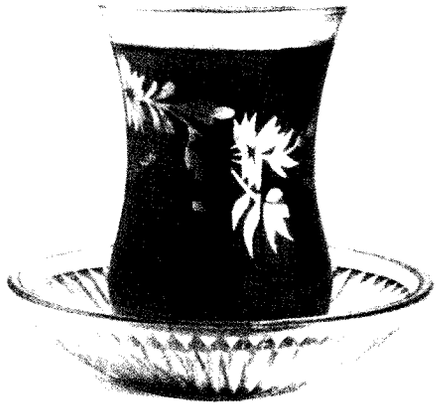
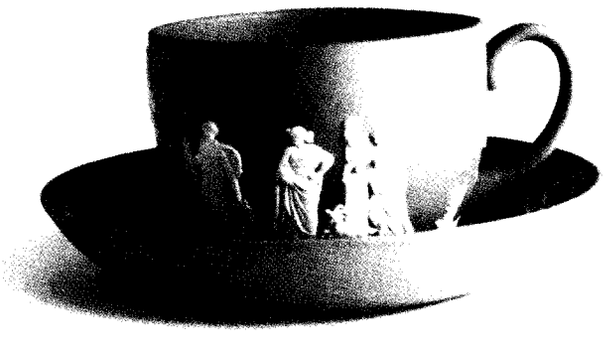
Whatever your cup of



Rose Hip Tea
Copenhagen, Denmark



Black Sea Tea
Istanbul, Turkey



Earl Grey
London, England

Green Tea
Osaka, Japan

Tea Cider
Stuttgart, West Germany

Camomile Tea
Paris, France

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other women's groups, which had championed the case, greeted the decision with dismay. It is all the more difficult to argue for proportional representation if women don't clamor as eagerly as men to sell automotive parts and aluminum siding.

Barnard history professor Rosalind Rosenberg, who testified on behalf of Sears in the suit, points out that feminists' preoccupation with discrimination "threatens to cripple the cause of working women, not advance it." Perpetually worried about potential encroachment upon equal opportunities, NOW doesn't fully concede the more obvious restrictions on women's time and ambitions: the presence of small children, the absence of affordable day care, and the difficulty of taking on jobs that require extra training, overtime, and travel. Pay equity may result at last in higher wages for women in underpaid jobs. But it will not necessarily ensure an equal distribution of labor.

ANOTHER SOURCE of controversy among feminists is the issue of benefits for pregnant workers. NOW is currently airing the same debate that divided feminists in the 1920s. Does protective legislation, granting women different benefits from those of their male co-workers, necessarily discriminate unfairly against women? Does an insistence on sex-neutral policies necessarily work in women's best interest? One of NOW's achievements, in Smeal's first term as president, was passage of the 1978 Pregnancy Discrimination Act, which prohibits employers from firing a woman solely because she is pregnant. Today NOW, the ACLU, and the League of Women Voters, along with conservative business groups and the Reagan Justice Department, are challenging a California law requiring employers to grant special benefits to pregnant employees (up to four months' leave, and a guarantee to reinstate them afterward). NOW believes that the disability benefits should be extended to all workers; the Justice Department wants to eliminate them. Both argue that the law discriminates against workers who are not pregnant. The case has gone to the Supreme Court.

Smeal says: "Our worry is protective labor legislation. In the past it was used not to hire women. . . . Our fear is that what appears to be a benefit will be used against us. If a person is disabled—male or female—she should be able to take a four-month leave without pay, and not be fired." This stand is clearly sensible, and NOW was an early supporter of Representative Pat Schroeder's Parental and Medical Leave Bill, currently before Congress, which would require employers to provide up to 26 weeks of unpaid leave for all employees with medical disabilities, including pregnancy, and would enable either parent to take up to 18 weeks of leave after the birth or adoption of a baby, or to care for a sick child. The worker would also be guaranteed the same or a similar job upon return.

Others, though, insist that women will never be able to compete fairly in public life if they aren't granted compensation for their work as mothers. Sylvia Hewlett charges in *A Lesser Life* that one result of the movement's reluctance to publicize women's continuing responsibilities at home is that the United States is the only industrial country in the world with no statutory maternity leave, and one of the few without subsidized day care. Hewlett argues that the social feminists in Western Europe have achieved more for working women by demanding special privileges than the equal-rights feminists in America have by taking an uncompromising stand on sex-blind laws and social policy. In France, Sweden, West Germany, Denmark, Italy, and England—all of which provide some form of subsidized day care, job protection, and paid maternity leave—the difference between male and female wages has been narrowing. The wage gap in America is the same as it was in 1939.

The tactics of mainstream feminists have been harshly scrutinized lately in politics as well. While saying that women in the workplace are driven by the same motivations as men, NOW has consistently argued that the sexes think and behave differently in politics. In 1984 Smeal wrote a book called *Why and How Women Will Elect the Next President*, which predicted that a woman would strengthen the presidential ticket and widen the gender gap, and that abortion and the ERA would be major election issues. Both Smeal and Goldsmith resent the labeling of NOW as a special-interest group. But NOW treats women as a critical voting bloc sharing distinctive concerns, and uses this presumption to wield its considerable influence in pressuring politicians. This is the role of any lobbying group. The problem in the 1984 election was that NOW's highly publicized demand that Walter Mondale choose a female running mate was seen by Mondale supporters (and exploited by Reagan supporters) as conclusive evidence that he was indeed the malleable captive of special interests. Liberal columnists came down particularly hard on NOW. During its July convention in Miami, where Mondale was welcomed with the chant, "Win with a woman, run with a woman," Richard Cohen wrote that the Democratic candidate was being "henpecked." "It will seem to many Americans that the choice of a woman . . . will result not from Mondale's sincere commitment to feminism . . . or even the stellar qualifications of a particular woman, but from the hectoring and—yes—threats of the organized women's movement."

In the end, the gender gap proved to be far less decisive in the 1984 presidential campaign than the Democrats had hoped and the Republicans had feared. And the pressure to choose a female running mate caused Mondale to select a woman with liabilities and a lack of qualifications that would have ruled out a male candidate. The vanishing promise of the gender gap may be largely attributed to Mondale's overwhelming weaknesses and Reagan's unassailable strengths. But far from helping to overcome those failings, NOW helped to expose them.

BETTY FRIEDAN, for one, has long been imploring her followers to accept the limits of legal remedies and divisive political tactics. In *The Second Stage* she replaced her explosive talk of "the comfortable concentration camp" of the suburban housewife with heady visions of "the new frontier where the issues of the second stage will be

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joined": the family. But this change of tack has elicited mutters of annoyance from the movement's current leaders, one of whom calls her criticisms "cavalier and galling." It was *The Feminine Mystique*, after all, which first emboldened a generation of women to shake off the constraints of traditional motherhood and marriage.

Friedan self-righteously blames her radical sisters for the movement's vulnerability on the family issue. "For us, with our roots in the middle American mainstream and our own fifties' families," Friedan wrote in *The Second Stage*, "equality and the personhood of women never meant destruction of the family, repudiation of marriage and motherhood, or implacable sexual war against men." That "pseudo-radical cop-out" was perpetrated by young extremists, "scarred early by the feminine mystique, and without firm roots in family or career, [who] gave vent to their rage in a rhetoric of sexual politics based on a serious ideological mistake." Perhaps. The radical feminists were certainly more uncompromising in their desire to overthrow what Kate Millet described as "patriarchy's chief institution." Yet in the 1960s and 1970s the liberal feminists showed scant concern for that institution themselves, except where it impinged on their independence. It is only in recent years that the family has become politically fashionable again.

TODAY THE weaknesses of the old tactics are clear, yet the solutions seem to be as elusive as ever. Like the civil rights movement it sprang from, the women's movement is having trouble reconciling the old politics of separatism with the new politics of accommodation. *The Second Stage* ends with a peroration on the need for "*human* liberation," and Friedan's recent article on resuscitating feminism talks lyrically of "international networking" with Third World women under a baobab tree in Nairobi at the U.N. Conference for Women. Her list of priorities includes: "a new round of consciousness-raising," "get off the pornography kick," "confront the illusion of equality in divorce," "affirm the differences between men and women," and so on. Nothing objectionable there, but not much to rally around either.

On the other hand, feminists won't get the better of fundamentalists in an overwrought debate over the rights of the unborn vs. the rights of women. Smeal has it wrong when she blames "the opposition" for all that ails feminism. This is just a more sophisticated strain of the paranoia that has long run through the rhetoric of the movement. Generic man is no longer the enemy (except in the eyes of antipornography fanatics like Andrea Dworkin). Today the oppressor that NOW denounces is embodied in "the male Catholic hierarchy," fundamentalists like Jerry Falwell, and ideologues like Ronald Reagan. In fact the women's movement has been remarkably successful in securing individual rights. What's needed is a new, generous, workable ideal of social justice. NOW, like the Democratic Party, hasn't yet convinced the public that it has more to offer than ineffectual reaction to Reaganism.

The sanctimony and hypocrisy behind the conservative talk about the family is obvious, and feminists should be the first to do something about it. As Goldsmith says, "We need to comfortably and affirmatively take back that ground that is legitimately ours. We are the people who really care about the family." This means vigorously endorsing progressive programs that work. The Child Care Action Campaign, working with other national child-care agencies and an insurance agent, recently succeeded in obtaining liability insurance for day-care centers, family day-care homes, and Head Start programs across the country that had been on the verge of closing. The Children's Defense Fund, long before Bill Moyers, has discussed the crisis in teenage pregnancy and tirelessly reported the effects of Reagan budget cuts on children. The House Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families has been a forceful advocate of Schroeder's parental leave policy, and of tax reforms that would aid families. And it has drafted a bill that would improve and expand day-care facilities through public-private partnerships, and would restore federal funding to programs serving poor families.

Kathy Wilson, the former head of the National Women's Political Caucus, rightly points out that NOW serves an invaluable function as "the two-by-four used to get the attention of the mule." Pat Reuss, the legal director at the Women's Equity Action League, says that the moderate women's movement "has to have a group on the cutting edge. We pray they won't embarrass us, but we're glad they're out there." NOW's energetic lobbying in recent months on behalf of the Civil Rights Restoration Act (which would overturn the Supreme Court's *Grove City* decision limiting the government's ability to enforce civil rights laws at federally funded institutions) has been commended by feminists from many camps.

FEW WOULD question that the victories won by the equal rights advocates have formed the foundations of contemporary feminism. But the time has come for a radical departure. Instead of simply fighting off the "pro-family" and anti-civil rights crusaders, NOW could use its political power to launch a major offensive for a series of concrete social reforms and changes in the workplace—beginning with affordable, widely available, licensed day care. That may sound more pragmatic than principled. But it could enable women, and men, to meet the demands of both their public and private lives. And it would address the fundamental family issue of the 1980s, which is the economic one.

Back in 1938, in an editorial in THE NEW REPUBLIC expressing strong reservations about the ERA, Felix Frankfurter was quoted as saying: "The legal position of woman cannot be stated in a single, simple formula, because her life cannot be expressed in a single, simple relation. Woman's legal status necessarily involves complicated formulations, because a woman occupies many relations. The law must have regard for woman in her manifold relations as an individual, as a wage-earner, as a wife, as a mother, as a citizen." It is this expansive vision that feminists need to recapture. NOW's problem these days, for all Smeal's rhetoric, is that it isn't militant enough. □

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STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

Where's the Career?

Whenever I see Jon Voight these days, I feel life rushing by—his life. What a commanding talent, immediately fierce or touching. What an odd career, marked by gaps and poor choices. The oddities are much like those of the two other American actors with whom he compares, Marlon Brando and Paul Newman. (I leave out George C. Scott and Robert Duvall, of equal rank but of quite different colorations.) Voight is 15 years younger than Brando and Newman, but already his career seems marked by a decision not to *have* a career—on film and stage—of the size and fullness that is open to him. Like the two older men, Voight has about him a faint air of regret at being so gifted in an art that doesn't have his full respect. Well, no one can maintain that the conditions of the acting life, on the American screen or stage today, are conducive to growth and excellence; but an actor in Voight's position can do a great deal more to shape those conditions than he seems to want to do. With Brando and Newman, magnificent as they have been from time to time, the question of a fulfilled career is by now settled. Voight is only 47, not exactly the cusp of senility. I know that he has done some theater work, which I haven't seen—I haven't seen him on stage in almost 20 years; but there's no conviction of drive in him, of goal. In films, he says, or his press people have said, he wants to do only significant roles. Like *The Odessa File* and *The Champ*? First-class screenplays don't flow unheeded past any star these days; but as far as one can tell at a remove, Voight is not making many moves toward evoking material. (For instance, has he seen *Glengarry Glen Ross*? Doesn't he want David Mamet to write a screenplay for him?)

Desert Bloom
(Columbia)

This year, after a considerable absence, Voight appears in two films, two crackling performances in two dubious pictures. The first was *Runaway Train*, a wild number that had more energy than sense. Voight played a lifer, a murderer, who escapes from a snowbound Alaskan prison and commandeers a freight train. The hunt for him (and another prisoner) narrows down to a man-to-man struggle between him and a brutal warden. Each man knows that he is the other's fate. In a script full of inflations, Voight captured frighteningly the exultation of a desperate man liberated by his knowledge that he has absolutely nothing to lose and only his own peculiar honor to defend. That fine performance contradictorily burst the bounds of the picture and held it together.

Now Voight appears in *Desert Bloom*, which is set in Las Vegas in the early 1950s on the eve of the first postwar atom-bomb tests in the desert nearby. Voight plays a veteran of World War II who was wounded in the leg and won medals, then returned to marry a woman with three children by a previous marriage. With a grizzled mustache, a short haircut, and a limp, Voight works in his garage, has sharp ups and downs with his family, suffers war nightmares, listens to his shortwave radio, and nurtures prejudices, conspiracy theories, grievances, and griefs. Essentially, he wants to live peacefully with his wife and his acquired children, but his inner convolutions intervene and, like all such convolutions, seem justified to him. Quarrels, quite bitter, and reconciliations, not quite complete despite his wife's adoration, are recurrent. To complicate matters further, the wife's sister, a sexpot (or Sexpot), comes to stay with them for the required 42 days until she can get her Nevada divorce.

These domestic rufflings are set against the background of the town's whispers and worries about an impending A-test. The town has fears and also a sort of pride in the event, all well enough treated as historical data. The trouble is that the script makes no connection between what's going on in Voight's home and what's going on outside it. The one exception to this is an incident involving him and his 13-year-old stepdaughter that could just as well have taken place in the face of a flood or a forest fire as an A-bomb test.

The director, Eugene Corr, has written a number of documentaries. He wrote the script of *Desert Bloom* with assistance from a social scientist, Linda Remy, and the result reminds me strongly of many of the plays that emerge from play-writing conferences around the country or from resident theaters. A writer with more earnestness than talent seizes on what he takes to be a significant juxtaposition of personal and public history, and tries to make them heighten each other. The result is always, in my experience, pedestrian: because the writer is moved by a big subject he doesn't have the talent to match and has no insights to add to those the audience already has. During the mid-1960s we saw a rash of plays about young men and women in their early 20s whose parents were scientists who had worked on the A-bomb. Each of the authors had been struck by the

FILMS WORTH SEEING

My Beautiful Laundrette. Hanif Kureishi's script about Pakistanis in London is a bit discursive, but is funny, sad, and troubling. Excellently acted. (Reviewed 4/7/86)

A Room with a View. James Ivory is no fireball director, but except for his Lucy, he puts this adaptation of Forster before us with some sense of the gavotte beneath the text. (3/24/86)

Shoah. Hebrew for "holocaust." Claude Lanzmann's nine-and-a-half-hour documentary (shown in two parts) does not chronicle all the Nazi atrocities against every people, but it is (I hope) imperishable testimony about the Final Solution. (10/28/85)

Turtle Diary. Like an exquisite small piece of carving. Glenda Jackson and Ben Kingsley are two Londoners who dream of liberating large turtles from an aquarium and returning them to the sea. Harold Pinter delicately adapted Russell Hoban's delicate novel. (3/10/86)

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idea of the weight of this heritage, and none of them really had anything more of substance to offer than the original idea. In *Desert Bloom* Corr apparently intended to give us a microcosm of troubles with an ultimate wisp of hope to set against the macrocosm of atomic threats and a wisp of hope. To this he added the contrast of the Las Vegas gambling milieu and the testing grounds. These collegiate profundities never graduate.

Corr's direction, though artily enigmatic at the start in a mid-European manner, settles down into fair fluency. But his writing is so thin that all the trappings—the bomb and the forthcoming test—burden it sententiously. The domestic climax is a dreadfully written and staged quarrel that comes about because of a (long foreseen) embrace between Voight and the visiting aunt. The scene is so ludicrously misproportioned—a rifle gets into it somehow—that it becomes like a tumult in a balloon basket. By force, rather than reason, the quarrel is brought under control, and the film ends with the family on the front porch watching the far-off A-bomb explosion and, of course, commenting on its beauty.

Matters are made worse, in a way, because Voight is so good. Several of the others are good, too. The 13-year-old is played by Annabeth Gish with soft 13-year-old secrets. We hear some of them because we see the story through her eyes, and she speaks the voice-overs; but though all her secrets are not spoken, they are conveyed. Her mother, Voight's wife, is played by Jobeth Williams, who, in my experience, never sets a foot wrong. This role combines sampler-motto dialogue, chintzy and cute, with slick work in gambling casinos, and Williams blends them both beautifully. Ellen Barkin, as her sister, is now a well-established talent after *Diner* (the pathetic wife), *Tender Mercies* (Duvall's daughter), *Daniel* (Timothy Hutton's wife), and a poignant performance in an "off-Broadway" film of a Grace Paley story. Here the sexpot aunt is so tritely written and costumed that one can compliment Barkin only for not letting the triteness hobble her.

Still, insofar as this defeated film contains a triumph, it is Voight's performance. It leaves us impatient with him—hungry for more Voight in better pictures.

ROBERT BRUSTEIN ON THEATER

A Shaggy Dog Story

After years of feeling marginal—he once called himself the oldest promising playwright in America—John Guare is about to experience a vogue. Two of his plays are currently being revived in New York—*Bosoms and Neglect* and *The House of Blue Leaves*, the latter in a production so highly acclaimed that it is being elevated from the miniature Mitzi Newhouse in Lincoln Center, where it opened, to the more spacious and glamorous and under-occupied Vivian Beaumont upstairs, fanfared by full-page ads in the *New York Times*. Guare is now destined to become the subject of newspaper features, magazine tintypes, TV talk shows, radio interviews, and all those other celebrity rituals that constitute the American version of ancient puberty rites and walkabouts. Or perhaps they're the gentile adult version of Jewish bar mitzvah parties where relatives and guests circulate around the confirmation boy applauding his speech, admiring his blue suit, and pinching his cheeks, before leaving him, bewildered, isolated, forlorn, amid the stacked plates and soiled tablecloths.

The House of Blue Leaves
by John Guare

Largo Desolato
by Vaclav Havel

John Guare is young enough to enjoy these rituals and seasoned enough to be prepared for the inevitable end of the party. He knows success is always accompanied by backlash, if not whiplash, and he will keep his good nature when the ballroom empties out. He will also keep his admirable devotion to the stage and his unwavering commitment to play writing, which have been courageously maintained in the face of unkind evalua-

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tions and sour reviews of the type I am about to offer.

I think I once compared John Guare to a big shaggy dog whose paws get all tangled up in its efforts to befriend you. In *The House of Blue Leaves*, this kindly creature seems to be standing on your shoulders and licking you all over the face. I don't recall, when I first saw this play in the early seventies, that it worked so hard to ingratiate itself with the audience, so part of the problem may be Jerry Zaks's curiously coy production (surprising in light of Zaks's much more hard-nosed approach to the sharper style of Christopher Durang). Whatever the reason, the intervening years have turned *The House of Blue Leaves* from a provocative off-Broadway comedy into an eager-to-please middlebrow commodity.

I realize that "middlebrow" is no longer a term in the critical lexicon, but how else to describe the divided tone of this calamity-packed laugh riot? *The House of Blue Leaves* is black comedy seen through rose-colored glasses. It ends with a shock, when the trapped husband, Artie Shaugnessy, throttles his dippy wife, Bananas, in the midst of her puppy impersonation. (Why didn't Torvald think of this when Nora started her squirrel bits?) But it's tough to accept a tragic climax after having been encouraged all night to regard murder, madness, physical affliction, adultery, and assassination as occasions for gags. Yes, I know about Joe Orton, but Orton never deviates from his remorseless japery. More like Peter Nichols with *Joe Egg*, Guare wants it both ways here—to exploit the absurdities of his maimed characters and then to draw down the mouths of their comic masks. But you don't establish dramatic empathy after two hours of farcical alienation.

"Alienation" is probably too lofty a word to describe a style that mixes arch one-liners ("Orion—the Irish constellation") with droll characters and whimsical situations, and turns the audience into a laugh track. Zookeeper Artie is a would-be songwriter who sometimes speaks in couplets. His consuming ambition is to compose movie music for his boyhood chum, the Hollywood director Billy Einhorn. Artie's guilty concern for the mildly insane Bananas (she occasionally tries to commit suicide by slashing her wrists with spoons) is the obstacle to this ambition. ("You wish I was fatter," she says, "so there'd be more of me to hate.") His peroxide tootsie, Bunny, doesn't offer much in the way of consolation by refusing to cook for him. ("We've gotta save some magic for the honeymoon. . . . I want it to be so good, I'm aiming for 2,000 calories.") On this particular day, the pontiff is coming to visit New York, and the couple's psychotic son, Ronnie, is planning a papal assassination. Like his nonfictional Turkish successor, Ronnie botches the job and blows up a couple of hip nuns instead, along with Billy Einhorn's girlfriend, the deaf starlet Corinna. (Bananas has mistaken her hearing aid transistors for lithium and swallowed them.) Billy decamps with Bunny, leaving Artie frustrated enough to strangle Bananas. And the play ends, as it began, with Artie in a blue spot, crooning songs.

It's too bad that Bananas gets killed at the end, because the dramatis personae of *The House of Blue Leaves* are cute enough, and the plot sufficiently contrived, to be recycled for a TV sitcom (the ultimate fate of Lanford Wilson's *Hot L Baltimore*). Billy consoles Artie for his blighted career by telling him he has "the greatest talent in the world—to be an audience—anybody can create." This flattering nod to the noncreative consumer, unequaled on the stage until Salieri's tribute to mediocrity in *Amadeus*, is the assumption underlying mass culture,

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photo courtesy of Billy Howard

THINKING BACK

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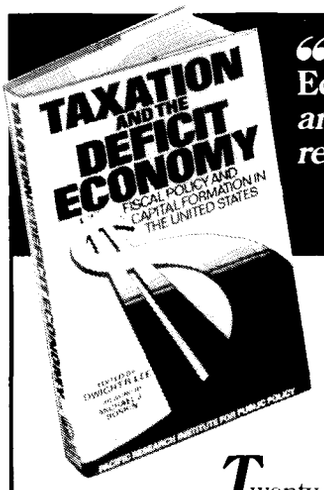
and it spells the difference between art created out of need and kitsch created out of need for endorsement. The very good actors in this production—and Swoosie Kurtz, Stockard Channing, and Julie Hagerty are especially fine American performers—have all been directed to sniff out that endorsement. Virtually nobody—the exception is Christopher Walken's silken suffering Billy—behaves normally, because virtually everybody is behaving for the sake of audience approval. Just once, a character—the assassin Ronnie—gives the spectators the raspberry, but even that mild breach of conviviality is followed by a quick "sorry."

The play is better constructed than the later work of Guare, who has a lot more feel for New York local color than for Nantucket or Civil War history, the subject of his more ambitious *Lydie Breeze* cycle. One also has to respect the playwright's effort to locate humor and vitality in the desperate careers of the dispossessed and uncelebrated, though it's not always clear how detached he is from their one articulated aim, which is to get on a plane to Hollywood. Dammit, I like John Guare, I really do, and I'm glad he's having his moment in the sun. I like him a lot more when he gets his paws off my chest and romps freely around the yard.

LARGO DESOLATO at the Public Theater is a much more ambitious play by a dramatist who continues to suffer for his art, Vaclav Havel. For that very reason, it seems almost callous to say that his artistry doesn't always match his heroism. Havel is a dissident writer who, unlike his countrymen Pavel Kohout and Milan Kundera, stubbornly continues to live in his native Czechoslovakia—despite imprisonment, harassment, abuse, and mistreatment by the authorities for his position on human rights. Recently he was released for reasons of health, installed in sumptuous quarters, and placed under constant surveillance. This maddening alternation of reward and repression forms the stimulus for the play.

Largo Desolato concerns a middle-aged philosopher, Leopold Kopriva, who inhabits a spacious apartment in contemporary Prague with a sympathetic female roommate (not his mistress). A hero to his friends and girlfriend, and to the workers at a nearby paper plant, he is a walking uncertainty-principle who lives in constant terror of being hauled back to prison, haunting the eyehole of his front door like a prisoner awaiting the



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executioner. When the secret police finally arrive, they promise to molest him no longer if only he will say publicly that he didn't write a certain theoretical essay they call an "intellectual disturbance of the peace." He interprets this as a demand that he deny his identity, "that I am not I." Vacillating to the point of nervous collapse, he first decides to sign and then, after an encounter with a young female philosophy student who offers to "resurrect that feeble heart," decides to refuse, saying, "My human identity is all that I have." When he informs the police of his decision, they tell him he has another postponement. By the end, he is begging for prison because prison at least represents certainty, but he remains trapped in undesired luxury and his own mortifying terrors.

This unadorned narrative line, with its echoes of Kafka and Orwell and Beckett, is fleshed out with encounters between Leopold and his past comrades, his mistress, and admiring workers, but remains nonetheless regrettably thin and derivative. Havel's technique is too causal, his imagination too linear, his theme too transparent, to achieve the transcendent nightmare dimensions of *The Trial* or *The Castle*. Yet he obviously recognizes that without metaphorical incident and distended characters, his plot runs the risk of banality. It is a problem familiar from his previous plays: how to tell the story of individual heroism under the embrace of the totalitarian state without falling into self-glorification or melodramatic postures.

RICHARD Foreman's production does much to add tissue to this oddly desiccated fable; for the first time in this inventive director's career, I believed he was working on behalf of a coherent stylistic idea rather than his own attention-getting mechanisms. Foreman provides the prevailing mood of Kafkaesque dislocation that seems only intermittently suggested by Havel. His setting (with Nancy Winters) is a remarkable use of LuEsther Hall, which extends its gold-leafed Romanesque arches into an Art Deco apartment of majestic proportions, tilted out of the ordinary with bizarrely tall and narrow bookcases, with an inexplicable crack down one of the white columns. Leopold's repeated trips to the eyehole of his front door (these repetitions are called for in the text) assume the hypnotic quality of Krapp's continual visits to his whiskey bottle, and the stertorous ringing of the doorbell is like the scene breaks in a work by Tadeusz Kantor.

Using the devices of the postmodern theater, Foreman thus builds up the atmosphere of tension and paranoia that is stated without being dramatized in the play, and he reinforces this atmosphere with orchestrated choreography. The two policemen, as well as the two workers, speak and walk with the simultaneity of automatons—much like the two blind men in Peter Brook's production of *The Visit*—and the lighting, supplemented by half a dozen arc lamps, abruptly takes on the harsh glare of an interrogation room. This unified directorial approach is not always sufficient to disguise the stylistic elusiveness of the play, which borrows freely from a range of contemporary literature, including (in the love scene between Leopold and the philosophy student) the rose plays of Anouilh. But with the help of a disciplined cast—especially Josef Sommer as Leopold, Larry Block and Burke Pearson as the workers, Edward Zang and Richard Russell Ramos as the policemen, and Jodi Thelen as the infatuated student—he manages to compel admiration for a writer whose moral character may exceed his creative talent, as well as for the imagination of theater itself.

THE ASTONISHED EYE

Letters on Cézanne
by Rainer Maria Rilke
translated by Joel Agee

(Fromm International, 98 pp., $12.95)

The New Painting: Impressionism 1874-1886

(Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, 500 pp., $40, $19.95 paper)

The cartoons of the mid-19th-century artist Honoré Daumier contain many brilliant impressions of the social history of modern art. In the distorted, gargoylelike faces of Daumier's artists and art lovers we read a chronicle of controversies, scandals, lunacies, and despair. Daumier turns every professional tragedy into a comic episode: the obscurity of the genius and the philistinism of the public become slapstick routines, parts to be played in the great art-world burlesque. Of all subjects, Daumier's favorite is the confrontation between the public and the paintings. He likes to take us into the Salons, the huge government-sponsored exhibitions of contemporary art, which were for much of the century the primary entrée to a successful career. On one side of the cartoon Daumier draws the public mob: bug-eyed, openmouthed, spitting out witticisms and inanities, itching to get on. Inevitably, the caption records some put-down of the artist, some ignorant aside. Confronting this noisy public are the pictures at an exhibition, and they, of course, are speechless: rows of canvases, looking very sad in their thick, heavy frames.

We're still fascinated by these Daumier cartoons of the 1850s. They're funny, and give us a general sense of what it was like to be present at the birth of great art from Courbet to Matisse. The public pageant of modern painting is now a major preoccupation of art historians. They like to document the social world with a fussy attention to detail. It sometimes seems in the new studies that the artists themselves fade from view, washed over by a stream of quotations from a bottomless primary source, the periodical press. At the center of all this obsessive sociological study is the modern viewer's anxiety about the errors of the past. No one wants to repeat the follies of the generations that gave modern art its early, skeptical reception. Thus we try to understand where our ancestors went wrong. But when you look at the controversial paintings of the 19th and early 20th centuries—really *look* at them—you may feel there was nothing so strange about the jokes and gibes of the general public. And you may not even be surprised by the reservations of the finest critics.

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"The New Painting," a show recently at the National Gallery in Washington and now in San Francisco at the M. H. De Young Memorial Museum, is a partial reconstruction of the series of eight exhibitions organized by the Impressionists between 1874 and 1886 to bring their art before this very reluctant public. The National Gallery exhibit, assembled by Charles S. Moffett, curator of paintings at the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, includes 160 works, mostly oil paintings. Among the artists represented are most of the major avant-garde figures of the 1870s and 1880s. These include Edgar Degas, Gustave Caillebotte, Mary Cassatt, Paul Cézanne, Paul Gauguin, Claude Monet, Berthe Morisot, Camille Pissaro, Georges Seurat, and Paul Signac.

Like the unofficial one-man exhibitions mounted by Courbet and Manet in reaction to the Universal Expositions of 1855 and 1867 and the once-only government-sponsored Salon des Refusés (1863), the Impressionist exhibitions are important steps in the progressive dissolution of the power of the Salon system during the second half of the 19th century. "The New Painting" is an attempt to establish exactly what the exhibitions of this group of artists (who called themselves the Société Anonyme) really looked like. The organizers of the National Gallery show probably wanted to re-create the flavor of the early avant-garde exhibitions, where the Impressionists showed alongside artists we don't think so highly of today, and this is a peculiar—perhaps an impossible—task. The frisson that the whole experiment had in 1874 (when the first show was held in the studio of the photographer Nadar) is now long, long gone. At "The New Painting" we feel as if we're seeing early Impressionism exhumed, rather than discovered.

THE catalog of "The New Painting" contains essays on the eight shows by as many experts, and each of these is a little scholarly turn packed full of information. The authors go through the dense foliage of 19th-century sources with a fine-tooth comb. In the catalog each reproduction of a work in the exhibition is accompanied by clippings from the contemporary press. This gives a kind of instant, undigested historical commentary that is fascinating, but also rather discouraging. The new breed of scholars seems to believe that the shape of a career, the nature of fame and influence, are objective facts that can be scientifically determined. The same sociopolitical background is brought in time and again, like the scenery of an old opera production pressed into service every year. As in literary biography, there are no incalculables left.

The new scholars, growing up in a period when avant-garde has become an acceptable element in the mythology of mass culture, are unable to believe in the great divide that often separated avant-garde and establishment tastes in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Artists like Andy Warhol and David Salle are seen as merging avant-garde ideals and popular appeal, and this merger becomes a model for the re-imagining of the past. For a decade now, the obscurity of the old avant-garde—the very concept of obscurity—has been under attack. Though some still see, in the struggles of the New York cooperative galleries and the eclipsed and overlooked achievements of many older artists, traces of the classical difficulties of the avant-garde, they are a tiny minority. Few now can bear the thought that society might be oblivious or wrong. It's fashionable to say, "See how many reviews these avant-garde guys got, they weren't so bad off." Historians create a cheerlessly crowded pasteboard landscape of facts and figures, and label it "the past." Everyone has a place, but the overall effect is suffocating. Documents are turned into history only by minds that can make the leap into the past. These historians may have all the details right, but they can't compose—they can't create a historical landscape that breathes.

THE TWO artists we leave "The New Painting" feeling most strongly about are Monet and Degas. Degas, who played a central role in organizing the shows, is represented here mostly by his tightly linear oils of the 1870s. His work feels immensely self-assured, and you keep coming back to it, even though it's tangential to Impressionism. Actually these early paintings by Degas are tangential to painting. He is at his freest and most pictorial in graphic media such as monotype and pastel. His best work here is a combination of the two, as in "Toilette" and "Cabaret," both from the late 1870s. In the canvases Degas no doubt achieves just the effects he was after, but these paintings are thin and dry. Degas naturalizes his beloved Ingres's vertiginous lines and porcelain surfaces, and they feel terribly diminished. In "The New Painting" Degas is a gigantic figure who goes his own way. There's a clear-headedness about his work that shows up to advantage, but he isn't where the action really is.

The action is with Monet. Without him "The New Painting" could hardly hold our attention. Of all the great figures of the past 150 years, Monet alone doesn't seem to care particularly about the art of the museums. He's the complete natural painter, and the only artist heedless enough of tradition to let loose with brush and color and create something entirely new. Monet is one of those headstrong, workaholic artists who produce turkeys galore. (He knew it.) He's also the single artist in "The New Painting" capable of making something durable out of a painting practice based largely on instinct. He's the sort of artist who comes to the fore when art is in need of change. As with Manet, the almost nuttily improvisational side of Monet's personality, which can become

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tiresome in a large one-man show, is exhilarating to behold when every other artist seems to be struggling to assimilate new developments.

I LEFT "The New Painting" with the feeling that pictorial revolutions aren't for everyone. How much sounder is the art of Pissaro and Renoir, in the 1890s, as they settle down to pursue a straight course. Pissaro's mind couldn't leap fast. To make first-class paintings, like his Parisian street scapes of the 1890s, he needed calm. An artist of essentially classical temperament, Renoir was also at times probably working against his natural inclinations in the Impressionist years. There are in "The New Painting" some Renoirs of truly appalling badness, the product of an artist at odds with himself. But then the 1880s seem to have been a difficult time for all the Impressionists, Monet included. Their surfaces became congested, and the authentic informality of the 1870s began to turn into a kind of facade, a pretense. Renoir's finest moments in the National Gallery exhibition are in his multi-figure scenes of late 19th-century social life. In "Le Bal du Moulin de la Galette" (1876), of which there are two versions, we see the beginnings of a vein of delicate, deftly humorous Impressionist social commentary that Renoir never really developed.

The liberating force of Monet comes through in "The New Painting": how essential this was, and also how necessary it was to move beyond such anarchic informality. At "The New Painting" you get, in the last galleries, some pointillism (including a magnificent Seurat seaport scene now in Prague), and Cézanne is represented by three forceful canvases from the Impressionist exhibition of 1877. For the generation of the post-Impressionists—Seurat, van Gogh, and Cézanne—Monet's example was central, but it had to be built upon from new, sturdier foundations. More than either van Gogh or Seurat, Cézanne is the artist of the end of the century who made the essential critique of Monet. Monet and Cézanne define, probably as much as any two artists can, the twin legacy of the 19th century.

Monet gives himself over to the moment of inspiration: the only logic he upholds is the logic of empirical experience. The collapse of space, the fusion of all elements at the surface, are the will of nature. Monet's bad taste, or rather his lack of taste—so clear at "The New Painting" in such banal concepts as a field full of turkeys—is his saving grace, for it frees him from the natural artistic impulse to judge.

Cézanne is pure judgment. Like Poussin, his 17th-century master, Cézanne reached the pinnacle because he had, as Poussin said of himself, neglected nothing. Cézanne's radicalism lies in the clarity with which he judges and weighs experience. His art is much greater than Monet's, and it is to Cézanne that Matisse and Picasso and Braque always turned. Monet, in eclipse in vanguard circles long before his death in 1926, comes to the fore again only after World War II, as Surrealism turns into an intuitive approach to the canvas in the work of the American Abstract Expressionists and the later work of the Frenchman André Masson.

When Cézanne died in 1906 at the age of 67, his work had already been for more than a decade a legendary standard—though inexactly understood and too little seen—for young, advanced artists. In the first years of the new century, he became the essential figure for them. In death he exerted a degree of influence he never knew in life. Cézanne's reputation was made in the private world of avant-garde art, far beyond the reach of the comic, Daumieresque encounters of the galleries.

THE German poet Rainer Maria Rilke, who married a sculptor and always had a special affinity with the visual arts, was in Paris the year after Cézanne's death and saw the two great memorial shows of 1907. Rilke visited the retrospective at the Salon d'Automne almost daily. Rilke's *Letters on Cézanne*, which consist of excerpts from the pages he sent his wife, were published in Germany in 1952 and have now been translated by Joel Agee in a small, well-designed book.

With their elegantly wrought fragments and obsessive articulation of every nuance of emotion, these letters on Cézanne are the product of a perfectionist's sensibility. Clara Westhoff-Rilke, the artist's wife, edited the letters, and obviously had in mind to make of the little fragments an account of an aesthetic education that would have some of the episodic logic of the *Notebook of Malte Laurid Brigge*, which Rilke was working on in Paris at the time. In Rilke's *Letters on Cézanne* the little Parisian street scenes, the meditations on van Gogh, and the accounts of Cézanne's life do form a pattern.

But the foreword by Heinrich Wiegand Petzet fails to give us a larger context in which to set these letters. They are related neither to the large movements of Rilke's life nor to the significance of Cézanne in Paris in 1907. The Cézanne memorial exhibitions took their place among the miracles of 1907—alongside Matisse's "Blue Nude," Picasso's revelation of African sculpture at the Palais du Trocadero, and his biggest breakthrough of that time, "Demoiselles d'Avignon." From here French art, in an extraordinary, bejeweled chain, passed through the sensations of 1908—Braque's summer in L'Estaque, the revelation of Henri Rousseau—and then on and on, toward the epiphanies of 1909 and 1910: cubism, Matisse's "Dance" and "Music." There's something spine-tingling, in the context of 1907, about reading Rilke's comment on the distractions of gallery-going: "You know how much more remarkable I always find the people walking about in front of paintings than the paintings themselves. It's no different in this Salon d'Automne, except for the Cézanne room."

IN THE foreword to Rilke's letters, Petzet observes that the poet's comments were in advance of most critical thought on the artist. This may be so, but I rather doubt Rilke came to these revelations completely on his own. Probably the poet—who knew a good many artists—was giving voice to what the keenest-eyed among his painter contemporaries were also thinking. Rilke's sense of how Cézanne transforms tradition is indeed very much in tune with what Matisse and Picasso were feeling in those years, though Rilke has a fancy way of describing his impressions that sometimes connects more to Proust.

In one of the first letters, Rilke takes the part of the flaneur, walking through the old precincts of the Fauborg Saint-Germain on his way to the Salon d'Automne. He comments on "the old closed-down hotels," "a servant in his morning livery," and imagines "an old lady, a grand-mère," living in one of the houses, which contains "all the interrelated things: the gaze of portraits, the dials of musical clocks and the content of mirrors in which the clear essence of this twilight is preserved." And then suddenly he says "it is hard to believe that this was the way that led to the Salon d'Automne," and we are looking at Cézanne. Rilke thinks again of the imaginary, cultivated old lady. "Cézanne is no longer possible for the old lady; but for us he is

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valid and moving and important." The next day Rilke reports to Clara that

> all of reality is on [Cézanne's] side: in this dense quilted blue of his, in his red and his shadowless green and the reddish black of his wine bottles. And the humbleness of all his objects: the apples are all cooking apples and the wine bottles belong in the roundly bulging pockets of an old coat.

The next day (the letters come fast) Rilke goes to the Louvre, and there begins to explore the connection between Cézanne and the great museum tradition. Rilke looks at the still lifes of the 18th-century painter Chardin and sees how

> Cézanne's very unique blue . . . comes from the eighteenth-century blue which Chardin stripped of its pretension and which now, in Cézanne, no longer carries any secondary significance. Chardin was the intermediary in other respects, too; his fruits no longer reminded you of a gala dinner, they're scattered about on the kitchen table and don't seem to care whether they are beautifully eaten or not. In Cézanne they cease to be edible altogether, that's how thinglike and real they become, how simply indestructible in their stubborn thereness.

TODAY we take for granted a great tradition in the painting of still life, passing from Chardin to Cézanne with perhaps a stop at the apples of Courbet. Seventy-five years ago it took deep insight to see all this. Rilke is beginning to grasp, in these passages, the gradual emptying out of painting—the severance, beginning in the 18th century, of major art from all the conventions of storytelling.

The thick crust of culture—Rilke speaks elsewhere in the letters of "beautiful old silverware in a confectioner's shop window," of "pitchers with slightly slanting, wide open silver flowers on the lids"—dissolves in the new vision of Cézanne. The directness of the color and the directness with which the subjects are approached merge into a fresh kind of harmony.

> Although one of his idiosyncrasies is to use pure chrome yellow and burning lacquer red in his lemons and apples, he knows how to contain their loudness within the picture: cast into a listening blue, as if into an ear, it receives a silent response from within, so that no one outside needs to think himself addressed or accosted. His still lifes are so wonderfully occupied with themselves.

It's this new kind of dialogue that's so moving in the Cézannes. The way the pure pats of color come to carry such a weight of association was called by contemporary critics "brutal" and "childlike." It was as if nothing now stood between the viewer and the pure, unmediated experience of the artist. But Rilke—along with, I believe, many of the younger artists—saw that Cézanne was casting aside so many of the old assumptions in order to achieve a new clarity of voice. What could be seen as flat, as childlike, was actually sensibility laid bare: a new and pure form of speech.

THROUGH Wolfgang Leppmann's marvelous new study of Rilke, published in this country last year, it's possible to grasp the significance of Cézanne for Rilke as a poet. Not unlike Cézanne, Rilke was an artist who in his youth was attracted to the banal poses of late Romanticism. Both men went through a painful weaning—they had to *learn* to accept reality. In Rilke's passage from Rodin—his first father figure among the visual artists (Rilke worked for Rodin as a secretary and wrote a monograph about him in 1903)—to Cézanne, we see the outlines of a journey toward the center of the great modern experiment. In the years of his immersion in the art of Rodin and then Cézanne, Rilke was discovering the necessity in his own work of giving each word its special, separate value. He became, according to Leppmann, a close reader of dictionaries, looking up even the most obvious words to make sure he had the meaning just right. This search parallels the process Rilke ultimately saw in Cézanne—the quest, beyond fixed assumptions and conventional formulas, for a new purity of utterance.

In a more general way, Rilke saw in Cézanne—not only in the evidence of the paintings, but also in the accounts he'd read and heard of the artist's life—an extraordinary example of the artist's devotion to work. Rilke quotes the painter Mathilde Vollmoeller as saying, during a visit they took together to look at the Cézannes, that Cézanne "sat there in front of [his subject] like a dog, just looking, without any nervousness, without any ulterior motive." Rilke describes the almost naive composure with which the painter could meet the amusement his work provoked among the townspeople of his beloved Aix, and even from his own housekeeper. For Rilke—as for Picasso, Matisse, and Braque—Cézanne's persistence and single-mindedness demonstrated what it had taken to nourish a new vision amid

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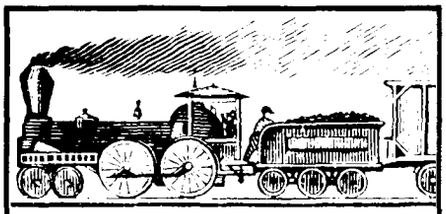

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all the fixed assumptions of late 19th-century art.

This search of Cézanne's was *the* enchanted journey, and in the early decades of the 20th century, as modernism was beginning to seem acceptable and even fashionable, it must have been daunting to look back on the courage of Cézanne. In 1936 Matisse gave the canvas by Cézanne that he'd bought from Vollard years before to the Museum of the City of Paris, and wrote the director a little note about the painting.

> In the thirty-seven years I have owned this canvas, I have come to know it quite well, I hope, though not entirely; it has sustained me morally in the critical moments of my venture as an artist: I have drawn from it my faith and my perseverance. . . .

For Rilke, who often composed no significant poetry for long periods of time, wore the most impeccable clothes, and passed chunks of his life in high society, Cézanne, the raggedly dressed old man going out day after day to study his beloved motifs, epitomized the life in art. Picasso—who also lived his share of the lush life—had similar feelings about Cézanne and that other great voyager of the 1880s, van Gogh. The modern era has been haunted by the modesty of the pioneers.

The bright flashes of understanding offered by Rilke's *Letters on Cézanne* begin, when you think about them, to shoot off little trajectories, a web of connections to the art of the 20th century. Picasso, who might have been one of the figures Rilke observed walking about in the Cézanne memorial show at the Salon d'Automne, floats to the surface of Rilke's life some seven years later, when in the Munich apartment of Hertha Koenig the poet spends many hours contemplating Picasso's "Saltimbanques" of 1905. Picasso's circus figures appear in the fifth of the *Duino Elegies*, where Rilke speaks of "these vagabonds even more transient than we are." And the tendrils reach further. After World War II, Balthus, whose mother was one of Rilke's last lovers, and his friend Giacometti (who also knew Picasso fairly well) became immersed in a reconsideration of the tradition of painting from direct observation, to which Cézanne had seemed to say, in his very last paintings—the ones Rilke saw in 1907—a mysterious farewell.

JED PERL

Jed Perl writes on art regularly for the *New Criterion*. He is writing a book about French art since World War I.

THE GULAG'S GREAT NOVEL

Life and Fate
by Vasily Grossman
translated by Robert Chandler

(Harper & Row, 880 pp., $22.50)

This long novel is one of a handful in our time that should be seen above all, and apart from any other qualities, as testimony. What is attested is the nature, in the most profound sense, of National Socialism and Communism, locked in decisive battle around Stalingrad as the events of the book take place. Vasily Grossman's qualifications for the task of presenting this factual and moral record are unique.

Grossman writes in the tradition of the social-realist novel. Of course, in the Soviet Union, where this is the orthodox form, "realism" has usually been a synonym for falsification. It was even laid down officially at the 19th Party Congress that the "typical" was not what happened most often in reality, but what "typified" the social and political scene. (Thus in a socialist country one splendid skyscraper in a city of slums was typical, while in a capitalist country one slum house in a city of skyscrapers was typical.) By a splendid irony, Grossman uses the method undistorted by such pieties. He has written the first true social-realist novel ever to come out of the Soviet Union, a devastating document of actuality. For all those in the West who claim to want to understand the Soviet Union, this is thus a key text.

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Born in the then-great Jewish center of Berdichev in the Ukraine, Grossman was only in his mid-teens at the end of the many-sided civil war, during which (as he tells us in *In the Town of Berdichev*) he saw the place change hands at least 14 times. In 1933 he started his career as a writer, orthodox in both form and content. From 1941 he was a war correspondent for the Soviet army paper *Krasnaya Zvezda*, and was present at Stalingrad and later battles. He was one of the first to see the Nazi death camps, in which his own mother perished. He published a chilling documentary, *The Hell of Treblinka*, one of the first works on the Holocaust. He was (with Ilya Ehrenburg) joint editor of the Soviet section of the *Black Book* on Nazi atrocities—which was never published in the Soviet Union.

He got into trouble in the 1946 literary repression, but his huge novel of the war—*For a Just Cause*—was treated as a Soviet *War and Peace*. In 1953, however, he came under violent attack. There is little doubt he would have been a victim of the new anti-Semitic purge that had already claimed the lives of dozens of Jewish writers had Stalin not died just in time to save him. In the "thaw" of the immediate post-Stalin years, Grossman was well regarded. It was then that he wrote *Life and Fate*, a sequel to *For a Just Cause* covering a later period of the war, in particular the Battle of Stalingrad. But everything has changed. *For a Just Cause* was thoroughly orthodox. *Life and Fate*, also totally opposed to Nazism, represents the Soviet system itself in the same mold and spirit.

THE adventures of the manuscript are themselves highly illuminating. It was finished in 1960, submitted for publication, and rejected as anti-Soviet. All known copies were confiscated by the KGB—and used carbons and typewriter ribbons along with them. When Grossman died in 1964 in his late 50s, deeply depressed, in poverty and in pain, he himself apparently believed that no copy existed. He had therefore hurriedly completed his shorter *Forever Flowing*, a translation of which appeared some years ago, also from Harper & Row. It lacks the vast structure of *Life and Fate* (and is not as well translated), but it is often effective. Its chapter on the slaughter of the peasantry between 1930 and 1933 is perhaps the fullest and most moving short portrayal of that period ever to appear.

Yet unknown to Grossman himself, an almost complete manuscript of *Life and Fate* somehow survived on microfilm. It was later brought to the West by that remarkable writer Vladimir Voinovich. The briefest skim leaves one astonished that Grossman should have thought it publishable in the USSR, even at the height of the Khrushchev thaw.

Like its orthodox predecessor, it is a huge book—more than 150 "chief characters" are listed at the end. A central thread links many of them to the relations and connections of the Shaposhnikov family, from the Jewish physicist Viktor Shtrum to the doctrinaire commissar Krymov. But it would take pages to give the merest summary of individuals and incidents in the 195 chapters, each a set piece, as the story ranges through the grinding battleground of Stalingrad, the intrigues in a scientific academy, a POW camp in Germany, the Lubyanka prison, a Soviet labor camp, and the Nazi death camps.

Some of his most moving passages, combining power and pathos, are about Jewish families. They are described in their homes, in their expulsion from their homes, in their death in the gas chambers. Grossman rightly insists that the Jewish experience is unique—that the Holocaust, the attempt to destroy an entire people in camps whose sole rationale and purpose was death, was an un-

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paralleled crime. But he does not stop there.

WRITERS and researchers—including Grossman himself—have stood at the site of Treblinka and made its horrors manifest. But "Komi, Salekhand, Norilsk, Kotlas, Magadan, Vorkuta, Kolyma," as Grossman lists the grim names, have not been investigated except from a distance. Grossman largely concurs with the comparison Primo Levi made in a recent article in THE NEW REPUBLIC (February 17) between what he knew firsthand about the Nazi death camps and what he had read about Stalin's labor camps. Yet corrections are called for, and Grossman offers some from closer up. Levi was wrong in thinking that the death roll for the Soviet camp system as a whole was 30 percent. He probably meant the rate per year in Kolyma. But for the system as a whole, over the entire Stalin period, the death rate was about 90 percent.

Levi believes, moreover, that the "death of the prisoners was not—even in the darkest years of Stalinism—expressly sought." True, even the sentence "without right of correspondence" did not expressly mean death, but it was in fact a code word for it. Again, the banning in 1938 of fur clothing and felt boots, allowing only padded jackets and canvas shoes in the coldest climate in the northern hemisphere, was not expressly a death order, but it was so in reality and in common sense. (There were indeed death camps proper in the USSR. There seem to have been some in Novaya Zemlya and elsewhere from which no one ever returned. There were also execution camps like Serpantinka—but on a far smaller scale than the German camps, with only tens of thousands killed.)

Levi also believes that Soviet camp guards were less brutal than Nazi ones, because the Nazis were trained to regard their prisoners as rubbish. There may be something in this, but not a great deal. The class enemy principle allowed the Soviet establishment as well to regard its prisoners as scum. Grossman—no one can have greater authority than he does on the matter—makes the point starkly in *Forever Flowing*:

> They had sold themselves on the idea that the so-called "kulaks" were pariahs, untouchables, vermin. The "kulak" child was loathsome, the young "kulak" girl was lower than a louse. They looked on the so-called "kulaks" as cattle, swine, loathsome, repulsive: they had no souls; they stank; they all had venereal diseases; they were enemies of the people and exploited the labour of others. . . . And there was no pity for them. They were not human beings; one had a hard time making out what they were—vermin, evidently.

Another character explicitly draws the comparison with the Nazis:

> What I said to myself at the time was "they are not human beings, they are kulaks". . . . Who thought up this word "kulaks" anyway? Was it really a term? What torture was meted out to them! In order to massacre them it was necessary to proclaim that kulaks are not human beings. Just as the Germans proclaimed that Jews are not human beings. Thus did Lenin and Stalin proclaim, kulaks are not human beings.

Another difference Levi might have noted was that children, or at any rate infants, were not sent to Soviet camps. There are none of the dreadful stories of mothers and babies thrust into gas ovens. But Grossman will not allow too much to be made of this. In *Forever Flowing* he goes back to the mass infanticide by hunger in the terror-famine of 1933. "The decree required that the peasants of the Ukraine, the Don and the Kuban be put to death by starvation, put to death along with their little children," he writes, and vividly describes the terrible process:

> And the peasant children! Have you ever seen the newspaper photographs of the children in the German camps? They were just that. . . . And by spring they no longer had faces at all. Instead, they had birdlike heads with beaks, or frog heads—thin, wide lips—and some of them resembled fish, mouths open. Not human faces.

One of the characters in *Life and Fate* is an old party propagandist who had written, in the early thirties, that "kulaks were burying their grain and refusing to eat, that whole villages—little children, old people and all—were dying simply to spite that state." (Estimates are that about two-and-a-half million to three million children died of hunger.) Because the slaughter of the Jews was unimaginably, uniquely frightful, this does not mean (Grossman implies) that anyone is entitled to dismiss other massacres less extreme—of the Armenians under the Sultan, of the Ukrainians under Stalin. Grossman's complete empathy about 1933 in the Ukraine does not weaken, but rather strengthens, his even more powerful damnation of the Jewish Holocaust.

Grossman's concern, as a novelist of "realism," is to re-create the events and the tone of various Soviet (as well as German) settings. The Soviet labor camps; the cells of the Lubyanka; the petty bureaucracy; the mean persecution of all who disagreed; the air of suspicion and scrutiny of all officers, scientists, and others; the disgrace and disappearance of innocents whether secretly dissident or thoroughly orthodox—all these differ from their Nazi equivalents. The atmosphere, the traditions, and the practices of the two regimes are at variance in many ways. Stalin's anti-Semitism was not based on race theory. Nor did he ever undertake the extirpation of any group, not even the kulaks, of whom about a third survived. The deported nations of 1943-45 lost only about 40 percent of their members, while the rest were meant to disappear as cultures, not as races.

BUT THE two systems do not differ, Grossman insists, in their essence. For the Nazis, too, he writes, "the sun has been extinguished by the smoke of the gas-ovens. And even these crimes, crimes never before seen in the Universe . . . have been committed in the name of good." In a scene in *Life and Fate*, he subjects an orthodox Communist prisoner, Mostkovskoy, to questioning by the intelligent Obersturmbannführer Liss; Mostkovskoy has no defense against Liss's insistence that the quarrel between them, however vicious and bitter, is really a family one—that their differences are over inessentials. Viktor Shtrum mulls over the differences as well, and comes to a similar conclusion. He "thought to himself 'To me, a distinction based on social origin seems legitimate and moral. But the Germans obviously consider a distinction based on nationality to be equally moral.' " He powerfully condemns the Germans, but goes on to say "but then we have the same principle"—that is, it does not matter to either Nazi or Communist if a man is "good, bad, gifted, stupid, stolid, cheerful, kind, sensitive, greedy." Only his "category" counts.

Grossman's essential argument is that the human being must be treated as an individual, not as a pawn in some struggle of transcendent theories. Even Tolstoy seems to him to err in this direction. He appeals to Chekhov, in a magnificent apostrophe, as the exemplar of humanity, and holds him up against Lenin and all other inhuman manipulators. His central point is that "the extreme violence of totalitarian social systems proved able to paralyze

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the human spirit throughout whole continents."

But overt violence is not the only enemy of the human spirit. The lie is the necessary accompaniment to terror. Alongside his documentation of the war and the camps, Grossman portrays the strain on the moral and intellectual faculties of living under an unendingly mean and intrusive regime of mediocrity—under what Pasternak called "the inhuman reign of the lie." Shtrum once makes a mild joke about Stalin to a close colleague in the academy where he works, instantly realizing that he is "banging a flask of nitroglycerin with a hammer." He faces a greater moral dilemma when he is asked, or rather is told, to sign a denunciation of a scientific colleague who has just been arrested. The squalor and anxiety of party-sponsored intrigues, made worse by incipient anti-Semitism, are perhaps harder for Westerners to envisage than straightforward slaughter and terror. Yet Grossman succeeds in evoking a state that "had dismissed the genuine heroes of long-past events and appointed new ones. The state had the power to replay events, to transform figures of granite and bronze, to alter speeches long since delivered, to change the faces in a news photograph." Against this, the suppressed longing for truth eats away at the minds of his characters, as it still does among the Soviet intelligentsia.

THAT Grossman has been "untouched by the influence of modernism," as Robert Chandler writes in his useful introduction to the novel, will worry few. His lack of "sparkle" is a sounder criticism. (Incidentally, one has only to read *Life and Fate* to see how Solzhenitsyn, sometimes represented as much the same kind of Tolstoyan writer, is in fact at a different level of flexibility, lightness, and penetration.) Yet in Grossman's case the heaviness is more aptly described as weightiness. All the hammering effectively pounds the points in, insistently and cumulatively.

It is clear what Grossman wants. A brave officer of "kulak" stock, Yershov, is "certain that he was not only fighting the Germans but fighting for a free Russia: certain that victory over Hitler would be a victory over the death camps where his father, his mother and his sisters had perished"—Soviet camps. Another character suggests what should happen when the war is over:

"Yes, comrades," said Madyarov suddenly, "can you imagine what it's like to have freedom of the press? One quiet morning after the war you open your newspaper, and instead of exultant editorials, instead of a letter addressed by some workers to the great Stalin, instead of articles about a brigade of steel-workers who have done an extra day's work in honour of the elections to the Supreme Soviet, instead of stories about workers in the United States who are beginning the New Year in a state of despondency, poverty and growing unemployment, guess what you find . . . ! Information! Can you imagine a newspaper like that? A newspaper that provides information!

"You begin reading: there's an article about the bad harvest in the region of Kursk, the inspector's report on conditions inside Butyrka Prison, a discussion about whether the White Sea canal is really necessary or not, an account of how a worker called Golopuzov has spoken out against the imposition of a new State loan.

"In short, you learn everything that's happened in the country: good and bad harvests; outbursts of civic enthusiasm and armed robberies; the opening of a new mine and an accident in another mine; a disagreement between Molotov and Malenkov; reports on the strike that has flared up in protest against a factory director who insulted a seventy-year-old chemical engineer. You read Churchill's and Blum's actual speeches instead of summaries of what they 'alleged'; you read an account of a debate in the House of Commons; you learn how many people committed suicide in Moscow yesterday and how many were injured in traffic accidents. You learn why there's no buckwheat in Moscow instead of being told that the first strawberries have just been flown in from Tashkent. You find out the quantity of a *kolkhoz*-worker's daily ration of bread from the newspapers, not from the cleaning-lady whose niece from the country has just come to Moscow to buy some bread. Yes, and at the same time you continue to be a true Soviet citizen.

"You go into a bookshop and buy a book. You read historians, economists, philosophers and political correspondents from America, England and France. You can work out for yourself where these writers are mistaken—you're allowed out onto the street without your nanny."

It has not happened yet, 40 years after the war.

ROBERT CONQUEST

Robert Conquest's new book, *The Harvest of Sorrow: Soviet Collectivization and the Terror Famine*, is forthcoming from Oxford University Press in the fall.

OUR LADY OF HARLEM

The Madonna of 115th Street: Faith and Community in Italian Harlem, 1880-1950 by Robert Anthony Orsi

(Yale University Press, 287 pp., $29.95)

In the days when East Harlem was Italian, the Madonna of 115th Street came down once a year from her niche high over the altar of the church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel and led a procession through the streets of her neighborhood. The festa of the Madonna was an occasion of profound importance in the life of Italian Harlem, and the purpose of this fine study by Robert Anthony Orsi, who teaches religious studies at Fordham, is to show how the moods and rhythms of that celebration reflected the essential character of the community.

The festa itself was not unlike the ones celebrated in other Italian communities throughout the old world and the new, but it seems to have had a special energy and meaning in Harlem. On the afternoon of July 16, the people of the community, together with hundreds of visiting relatives and former neighbors, began to gather before the church on 115th Street. Weeks had been devoted to preparing foods, scrubbing the neighborhood, and assembling the necessary appliances—huge candles to carry in the procession, clothes to wear at various times throughout the nights and days of the festa, wax models of human organs and limbs to present to the Madonna, miniature red horns and similar devices to ward off the evil eye. The streets were hung with crepe and strings of colored lights. Vendors offered a wide range of foods, religious tokens, and festive sou-

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venirs. So the pulse of the streets suggested carnival as well as solemn rite, and the crowd, judging from Orsi's description, had all the variety of a medieval pageant. There were worshipers in special robes, penitents with disheveled hair and bloodied faces scraping along on hands and knees, pilgrims who had walked barefoot all night from distant parts of the city, little girls in white Communion dresses, and a medley of other costumes worn by celebrants and onlookers alike.

The procession itself was attended by bands and fireworks and the smell of incense, and it followed the Madonna through the streets of East Harlem while trains rumbled along the elevated tracks overhead and the traffic of the city swirled past. The lines drawn by the route of the procession formed a map of the Italian quarter. Early in the century the tour encircled a very considerable territory—so much so, in fact, that two separate processions had to be sent out in opposite directions to encompass it. But years passed and the procession circled in ever-narrowing arcs as the community shrank and closed in on itself.

When the procession had been completed, hundreds of celebrants returned to the front door of the church and began a wait as long as several hours to enter the sanctuary and petition the Madonna for future favors or to thank her for past ones. In the course of these devotions, mounds of wax models, melting in the heat of a July night, were strewn around the altar, and in moments of special exuberance a woman might be dragged down the aisle of the church by a member of her family, her tongue out and rasping against the grain of the stone floor. In the days to follow—a week or more, old-timers have informed Orsi—the streets of East Harlem were full of feasts, concerts, dances, games, and a general atmosphere of merriment as the religious devotions of the first day shaded over into more secular festivities.

The festa, according to Orsi, was not just a time of celebration but a "sacred theater" in which the spirit of a people and the cultural texture of its ways were expressed with particular sharpness. "Every July 16, the soul of a people was revealed in East Harlem," he says, and on those occasions "we are offered a unique opportunity to read the theology of a people." The notion that the mind of a people is often reflected in its celebrations and devotions is an old one in the social sciences, dating back at least to Emile Durkheim. If Orsi knows much about this tradition or has learned much from it, he does not tell us. Nonetheless, he has done a remarkable job of breathing new life into what might otherwise have been a routine community history by using the festa as a window to look out onto the wider cultural landscape of East Harlem.

Orsi writes in telling detail about the history of the community, the overwhelming importance of family and household—the "domus"—in Italian life, the problems that beset those small moral worlds, and the place of popular religion in the lives of newcomers trying to cope with the angularities of an unfamiliar land. Each of the chapters speaks of a particular part of the immigrant experience, but it is the sweep of the book, the breadth and generosity of its overall vision, that is its main strength.

The story of the community opens in the 1870s and 1880s when the first Italian immigrants, almost all of them from the southern half of Italy—the mezzogiorno—began to gather in East Harlem. They had left conditions of almost unimaginable misery in the old country, and they found East Harlem a hostile terrain at first. The Irish, who had immigrated a generation earlier, controlled the precincts, the trades, the schools, and the parishes. As a result the Italians began life in New York with limited job opportunities and deteriorating tenement housing, as well as with cultural reflexes that were not at all well tuned to the realities of the new land. Soon after the turn of the century, however, the Irish and then the Jews, having completed their terms as ethnic newcomers to the neighborhood, began to drift away. From that time until the years following World War II, the Italians were in command of East Harlem. At its best, or so Orsi's informants report, Italian Harlem seems to have been a true community—the kind of urban village in which people share troubles as well as celebrations, and in which one can count on others to care.

But it was a hard time, too, because there is something about the hard surfaces and the nervous ways of the American city that can endanger even the most secure of cultural patterns. This is a wholly familiar process, of course, which historians and sociologists have been documenting for years. The first generation of immigrants—in Harlem as elsewhere—often tries to deal with the problems of a new world by withdrawing ever more tightly into an envelope of old and familiar ways. That strategy can work for a while, all the more so if one lives in a neighborhood of people with similar needs. But the second-generation children, inevitably, are creatures of the new land. They are schooled there, develop new outlooks there, and learn not only to speak but to think in the new language. It is sometimes very difficult to see clearly across the fissures that open up as a result: parents can look remarkably obdurate and sullen at that distance, children disrespectful and wayward. When an old-world father really cannot sense the difference between gentle flirting and outright promiscuity, or when an old-world mother really cannot discriminate between the customs of her birthplace and the laws of nature, both parents and children are caught in a spiraling dilemma.

It was a hard life for many, then, and especially so for the women. They had to yield to the posturing of their menfolk while supplying the emotional core of what became an increasingly fragile family structure. There must have been contentments and consolations to be derived from sitting at the center of all those concentric layers of family, but at the same time most of the humiliations

INSIDE THE APPLE

You visit me inside the apple.
Together we can hear the knife
paring around and around us, carefully,
so the peel won't tear.

You speak to me. I trust your voice
because it has lumps of hard pain in it
the way real honey
has lumps of wax from the honeycomb.

I touch your lips with my fingers:
that too is a prophetic gesture.
And your lips are red, the way a burnt field
is black.
It's all true.

You visit me inside the apple
and you'll stay with me inside the apple
until the knife finishes its work.

YEHUDA AMICHAI
—translated by Chana Bloch

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and disappointments experienced elsewhere in the family radiated to that center. It was the women, as always, who absorbed the shocks, dealt with the difficulties, consoled the hurts, and labored to keep the integrity of the household intact.

THE Madonna was their deity. She knew what it was to be a woman—the pains of birth, the worries of motherhood, the sorrows of loss—and yet for all her own sufferings, she had the compassion and grace to provide solace to others. One could talk with her, cry with her, even argue with her. "I have received many graces," Orsi quotes one petitioner as saying, "but now I want another one, and I'm sure the Madonna will listen, because I fight with Her, I get angry with Her, and then I always ask Her pardon—this is the best system." What male deity could be dealt with so sensibly? The festa of the Madonna was, more than anything else, a time of devotion for women.

The fact that the festa took place largely in the streets and was accompanied by a passion that sometimes bordered on frenzy was an important part of its meaning. The kinds of Catholicism that came to America from the mezzogiorno were not shaped by the stately cadences of the Church. They were earthy, sensuous, full of the sounds of mourning and suffering—a peasant spirituality that spoke of fields and animals and voices whispering in the trees rather than of abstract deities and ancient histories. The American Catholic hierarchy, by then a largely German and Irish affair, looked upon all of this with sharp suspicion. The church was tidy, dignified, indoors; the Italian street feste seemed primitive and hysterical by comparison, hinting of something dark and pagan. The spiritual temper of the mezzogiorno involved too many shrines and devotions and impulsive pilgrimages, too much noise and exuberance, too fuzzy a boundary between the sacred and the secular. Such a temper, clearly, could not be easily contained within the spaces and schedules of institutional Catholicism, and so, as Orsi points out, the Italians of Harlem recognized a clear distinction between religious feelings on the one side and the kinds of worship mandated by the Church on the other.

In such a context, the Madonna of Mount Carmel meant something very special. She represented Communion—a connecting of the ever more scattered pieces of an immigrant's life. Her reach embraced both individual and family, the old ways of the *paese* and the newer ways of America, the differing sorrows of first- and second-generation settlers. Her residence became the "village church of Italian Harlem," and as its presiding spirit, she replaced the scores of hometown saints that had once scattered the devotional energies of her *paesani*, and brought together men and women from many different parts of Italy who had not up to that point really thought of themselves as "a people." Above all, however, the Madonna represented a merging of the sacred and the secular, the divine and the human, the abstract spirituality of the Church and the more immediate spirituality of the streets. "The divine," says Orsi,

> in the figures of the Madonna and her suffering son, was not distant from the lives of the people of Italian Harlem but was there in the streets and in the domus. Italians lived intimately with the saints: they wore their clothes, told funny and affectionate stories about them. They would not be exiled from the sacred. . . . Although they made a distinction between themselves and the sacred, the people never set the two worlds completely apart.

The festa became a ritual playing-out of this form of Communion. When the Madonna left her place in the church to make the rounds of her community, she was, at least for the moment, drawing the fragments of East Harlem into a more coherent whole. Orsi puts it wonderfully:

> The fusion of sacred and profane, of the serious and the apparently trivial, troubled observers of the festa, who were offended by the noise and food and emotion in the presence of the sacred. Yet as we back off from the festa and see it in all its lived intensity, in the conflict and tension as well as the hope and reverence of the people's new lives, hear the prayers and cries and laughter, and smell the steam of sausage and peppers cooking under colored lights, we sense that this sustaining of opposites is probably the epiphany of the entire meaning of the festa.

THE HISTORY of la Madonna del Carmine is the history of her people. She came to Harlem around 1880, an immigrant from Salerno, and spent her first years in America in a tenement on 111th Street. In 1884 she moved to the basement of the church on 115th Street, and she came into her own, finally, when Italians took full charge of East Harlem, moving to a place over the main altar in

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1923--the same year, significantly, that Fiorello LaGuardia replaced Isaac Siegel as East Harlem's congressman.

In the years following World War II, the Italians of Harlem began to disperse, their old territories filled by migrants from Puerto Rico. But the familiar process by which one ethnic group moves up into better jobs and out into better neighborhoods when another claims its place at the bottom does not operate for Madonnas. The children and grandchildren of the people who were devoted to her have moved to other places and other promises. But she remains, still in her niche, at the church on 115th Street.

She has the face of a 14-year-old girl and a thick peasant body. Her hair is beautiful, clearly human. Her dress and crown are those of a queen. She holds the infant Jesus in the palm of her left hand, almost as if he were a bird, a creature so small and frail and doll-like that one scarcely notices him at first. On a Tuesday morning last month, the front entrance of the church was bolted shut, although a door in the rectory on 116th Street opened to the ring of a bell. Two worshipers were in the church, both black. Parked near the front door was a sedan with a cardboard decal reading "El Barrio Taxi Service." There are unmistakable signs in the immediate vicinity of what the old community must have looked and felt like—including a small shop a few doors down 115th Street that displays the familiar red horns to ward off the evil eye, along with the usual religious medals and tokens—but Italian Harlem seems to have eroded into a small cluster in the middle of Spanish Harlem.

If one is moved by the occasion to light a candle, as I was, one will discover that it is a flickering bulb turned on by an electric switch. Near it is a sign reading, "God is on the line. Don't hang up." I was surprised at these things, coming fresh from a reading of Orsi's deeply compelling book. But the Madonna, who has seen so much, appeared as calm and impassive as ever.

KAI ERIKSON

Kai Erikson is editor of the *Yale Review* and professor of sociology at Yale University.

WHAT GORDON KNEW

Peru
by Gordon Lish

(Dutton, 222 pp., $15.95)

Let's be honest, novel readers. We expect a distinguished teacher and editor of avant-garde fiction to come up with a novel that is structured like a corkscrew, that uses deliberately banal and repetitive language, and that is about—if it can be said to be "about" anything—the convoluted processes of memory. Yet deep in our hearts, when we see all the reviews describing Gordon Lish's *Peru* in such terms, do we really want to read the damn thing? Despite our best reconstructed-highbrow efforts to appreciate innovative fiction for its ingenious tricks of structure, language, and memory, don't we still sneakingly hope that a novel will be about society and the individual, reason and passion, good and evil? Allow me to report, as most reviewers haven't, that *Peru* is very much about these human themes—thanks to, not in spite of, its innovations.

First, the structure. A narrator named Gordon begins in the present as a middle-aged family man, catching a bit of horrifying footage on TV: two or three men silently (the sound is off) stabbing each other on a rooftop, while other, uniformed men riddle them with bullets. Between this glimpse of unidentified slaughter (we later learn it takes place in Peru) and an accidental head injury received the next day, Gordon's memory is jolted into an obsessive quest for the truth about a crime he committed in childhood: the murder of another small boy in a sandbox. Spiraling round and round past the same details, the narrative bores a deep hole into the buried strata of Gordon's mind. Summarily sketched as an adult, Gordon the child is, by contrast, a fully realized character—for a child. We must accept that he is a child.

Which brings us to language. Most reviewers have found Gordon's motivation obscure, and have concluded that the novel has nothing to say about morality. Certainly it is befuddling to read a fiction completely lacking in the language of feeling, to say nothing of right and wrong. From the details he relates, we are able to deduce that Gordon is neglected, perhaps even abused by his parents; that he is envious of his more affluent neighbors, who humiliate him with patronizing kindness; and that he is frighteningly lonely, inventing company and meaning out of the measliest scraps of attention. Yet none of these characterizations appears in the text. The adult narrator states quite early that "I should be skipping the feelings and sticking to other things, anyway . . . to what I remember because I actually heard it or saw it. I should be sticking to things like that before things start getting too mixed up."

That's exactly the point. Gordon is reaching back to the mental state of a six-year-old starved for love and adult guidance. In this era of Spielbergian fantasies about the purity and wisdom of childhood, we forget that it is we who socialize our young, not vice versa. For most six-year-olds, there's a trusted adult around to help sort, classify, and above all, name the mixed-up chaos of emotion, impulse, and half-formed ideas. It's a brilliant stroke to omit the vocabulary and concepts of emotion, morality, and psychology from this narrative of murder, because they are missing from the little murderer's consciousness. In young Gordon we see a child turning into a monster because he's trying to socialize himself.

SURPRISINGLY, the little murderer grows up to be a normal adult, who neither represses the memory of the crime nor possesses any rationalization about how and why such a thing could have occurred. Instead of a convincing link between our (and Gordon the adult's) present and that past, we get innovative-fiction touches: the characters are named after Lish and his family, and the dedication includes the name of the (presumably) fictional dead boy.

At first I thought it diminished the effect of the novel to have Gordon start out with the same voice he ends up with. If there's no difference between his adult mind and his mental condition on the

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day of the murder, then how has he avoided committing a slew of other crimes over the years? But then I realized that Mr. Lish was toying with me. He resorts to fictional trickery to distract us from the more obvious meanings and resonances of his story. Take the setting, for example: an American suburb in 1940, where Jewish children are told not to cross the street to the "Christian" side. Like the vocabulary of feeling, the vocabulary of war, Jewishness, and the Holocaust are scrupulously omitted. Gordon talks about "the Christians," but never mentions the word "Jews." No parallel is drawn between this portrait of a resentful self-aggrandizing little boy, distracted by half-baked paranoid notions and expecting to win approval for killing, and grown men in the same world at the same time with the same problem.

But it's there. Very likely Mr. Lish means to prevent us from making his tale into an allegory. Certainly it reduces the horrific impact of the murder to consciously read it as a stand-in for something larger. As it is, the event is so imperfectly tied into the present, and into normal consciousness, that the hour of the murder stands quite alone with a compelling, continuous reality seemingly outside ordinary space and time.

The link with larger horrors is made plain when Gordon identifies what he sees on TV with that hour which, for him, has never stopped occurring. *Peru* is simply the name Lish gives to that endlessly prolonged moment during which we human beings keep on staggering around, bleeding from the wounds we inflict on each other, understanding nothing of what is happening to us, thinking only of how to deliver the next blow.

MARTHA BAYLES

Martha Bayles is a novelist and critic who writes about television for the *Wall Street Journal*.

CORRESPONDENCE, *from page 6*

fact that these players are human and therefore as susceptible to life's roller coaster as the rest of us. Their employment status throughout ought to be determined by the criterion most of us accept as equitable: job performance.

MARK TRIFIRO
Atlanta, Georgia

MORE CONTRA-VERSY

To the editors:

Adolfo Calero has been getting a bad rap in TNR lately. Yes, he was a successful businessman. Yes, he knew Somoza. But he was not one of Somoza's "henchmen," as Martin Peretz says ("Cambridge Diarist," April 7), nor should he be kicked out of the U.S.-backed *contra* movement, as Robert Leiken implies ("Reform the Contras," March 31). In Shirley Christian's book *Nicaragua: Revolution in the Family* (which was favorably reviewed in TNR), she wrote that Americans in Nicaragua had "a special animosity for Somoza, and . . . a special affection for many other people in Nicaragua. . . . One such Nicaraguan was Adolfo Calero Portocarrero, a leader of one of the factions of the [opposition] Conservative Party that did not participate in the [Somoza] government. . . . He was a friend of Pedro Joaquin Chamorro [murdered for placing *La Prensa* in opposition to Somoza]. And he was on speaking terms with Tacho II [Somoza]. . . . 'I told Tacho, "You're going to lose your best friends, the gringos. . . ." But the idea I had was not to warn him, but to convince him . . . to change,' Calero recalled."

Christian reports that by June 1979 the U.S. was proposing "to create a transitional government made up only of the non-Marxist members of the San Jose junta, plus some people such as . . . Calero."

"In the struggle against Somoza," Christian writes, "Calero had played his hand publicly, peacefully, inside the country. But . . . power had been defined from outside. . . . he wondered if power would again be defined from outside [through the *contras*]. Did he want to be inside, and left out, again?" The Sandinistas began to suspect him of ties to the *contras*, and during a visit to Costa Rica "friends . . . were driving him crazy with advice . . . not to go back, that he might be jailed, even killed. While Calero was still debating what to do, Tomas Borge's State Security agents pulled up to his house in Managua . . . and helped him to make the decision. The security operatives forced Maria Calero's sister and brother-in-law out of the house and occupied it." Soon afterward Calero publicly joined the *contra* leadership.

Martin Peretz and Robert Leiken owe Mr. Calero an apology.

JACK NOBLE
Los Angeles, California

To the editors:

When I was asked to write my first piece for THE NEW REPUBLIC three years ago, I was honored and proud to have some of my work appear in a journal with such a distinguished liberal tradition. When I read your editorial "The Case for the Contras" (March 24), I was angry and ashamed that my piece on the space shuttle had appeared in the magazine.

ROBERT BAZELL
NBC News
New York, New York

TRB, *from page 4*

swagger down the corridors of the Pentagon, and the more money Extravagant Press will pay him for his story.

In the case of David Stockman, a vast assortment of people and corporations have both an emotional and a financial stake in finding high drama in his years as the government's chief accountant. The list includes Stockman himself, all the reporters who covered him, the investment bank that hired him, his book publisher, and the magazine that purchased the serial rights. *Newsweek* paid a reported $250,000 for its two excerpts from Stockman's book. So now it buys an ad promoting the excerpt and bragging, with more enthusiasm than grammar, that "It's another example of when important people have something important to say, they say it in *Newsweek*." Sure they do, for $250,000. And if you've paid $250,000, you're damn well going to decide that what they have to say is important.

The emotional and financial incentives for high drama among high officials can explain the otherwise inexplicable growth of federal deficits during the administration of a president well known to abominate them. Reagan cut taxes, on the advice of his supply-side economist friends that this was the best way to increase government revenues. But meanwhile, over at the Office of Management and Budget, Stockman was secretly sabotaging this effort, knowing that a dramatic failure would increase the advance for his new tome, *Budget Daze* (Squander Books, $34.95), or whatever it's called. If you need further evidence, just observe the way the deficits immediately started coming down when Stockman signed his book contract, pocketed his cash, and resigned. I'll breathe a lot easier when Richard Perle does the same.

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NEW YORK DIARIST

Pushing Buttons

IN A ROCOCO chamber above an Italian restaurant in the heart of Manhattan, a dozen barons of Wall Street, a few academics, and the odd journalist are pondering questions of greed. "How much is enough?" one of the have-nots innocently inquires. "Why do you keep on accumulating wealth after you've made ten, 20, or 100 million?" To a normal person, ten million dollars would seem like enough. But anyone who thinks that's enough is not the type who can acquire that much in the first place. Hence the mystery. None of the answers satisfies. "There is no advantage in not having capital," one plutocrat observes diffidently. "It's the game," another explains. A third says: "There's never enough. The more you have, the more buttons you can push." Buttons, in this case, mean power, but the metaphor (I see a phone with rows and rows of buttons) is significant. The ultimate power is getting someone on the horn and saying, "Buy 10,000 Texaco," or "Book me on the next Concorde," or "Go ahead and scramble the F-111s." But these are smart, sensitive men, and almost all of them agree that things have gone too far: "Wall Street today is like 1981 in the oil patch—or like 1927 on Wall Street." The second analogy implies that, in the mind of the speaker, the bull market still has a couple more years to run. We moralize and philosophize and head for the door. One baron yells to another, "Let's get back. The market's up 17 points."

STUDENTS OF greedology should check out the 1986 proxy statement of the American Express Company. In its flimsy pages, in shy, small type, they will discover that poor Mike Deaver is a piker. Just look at the haul of four other former public servants. There's Gerald Ford, ex-president. He'll make about $200,000 giving advice to the company this year. Henry A. Kissinger does a lot better. Kissinger Associates Inc., says the proxy, "provides consulting and international advisory services to the Chairman of the Company for an annual fee of $100,000. Kissinger Associates Inc. also advises Shearson-Lehman on international and political matters, for which it receives a fee of $200,000 per year. . . . In addition, Dr. Kissinger has agreed to conduct speaking engagements and appearances for and provide advice to Shearson-Lehman [double billing?] . . . for which he receives $120,000 per year." Total take: at least $420,000, plus a $20,000 director's fee. What advice did these fellows provide? Did they tell American Express that oil prices would plummet, that the yen would rise, that travel to Europe would decline, that Beatrice would be bought out? The proxy, on these points, is silent.

THE THIRD PUBLIC servant? Meet the boss's wife, Linda Gosden. Back in 1983 she was a mere flack for the U.S. Department of Transportation, making in the middle five-figures. When Transportation Secretary Drew Lewis moved to Warner Amex Cable, a company jointly owned by Warner Communications and American Express, he took Gosden with him as a senior vice president. The next year she married James D. Robinson III, the chairman of the board of American Express. In January 1985 she received a bonus of $263,333 for her performance the previous year. In January 1986 her bonus was $450,666, on top of her salary of $121,500. And there was more: "Upon sale of the Company's interest in Warner Amex [American Express sold its half to Warner last February], she received $1,070,000 pursuant to the vesting schedule of the plan." That's a total of nearly two million dollars in the space of 15 months. The proxy assures us that "Mr. Robinson had no participation in her employment, the terms of her employment or in the establishment of her compensation arrangements." Thank goodness. This is a case of merit, not nepotism. And anyway, what Ms. Gosden made was a pittance compared with what Lewis walked away with: bonuses totaling $12.2 million paid over the same 15 months.

THE CHAMPION moralizer of Wall Street is Felix Rohatyn, senior partner at Lazard Frères and one of the dozen or so guys you're supposed to call if you want to take over Exxon or the State of Idaho in a leveraged buy-out. He and his wife, Elizabeth, are on the cover of this month's *Manhattan,inc.*, tsk-tsking over "the shame of the city's rich," the shame being that the rich "won't abandon their ceaseless pursuit of glamour to attend to the agony of the poor sleeping on their grates." Their prescription is less money for the symphony and the ballet, more money for the homeless. Not a bad idea, but it seems ludicrous coming from the people who posed for the cover in their elegant apartment, wearing tastefully expensive clothes and dead-to-irony expressions. Having social-climbed through fashionable good works, the Rohatyns now pull a brilliant switcheroo, leaving their rivals all dressed up for the next charity ball but morally naked. This is an old device of Felix's. Having made millions off the merger boom, he has lately taken to philosophical doubts about its wasteful effect on the economy. But how often can Rohatyn pull off this trick? The April 24 issue of the *New York Review of Books* also features Rohatyn on the cover, heralding "A New Chance for the Economy!" This is amusing, since Rohatyn's reputation as an economic pundit—the only thing that makes his views of any interest—is based on his repeated predictions of doom and gloom. But it turns out that what all the current economic good news provides a "new chance" to do is exactly what Rohatyn previously insisted must be done because of all the economic bad news—i.e., set a board of important men to run things. "As I have argued before [he certainly has!], some national entity reflecting the interests of industry, labor, and government should be available to help frame and carry out such a policy." The policy includes a gas tax, a one-year freeze on spending, "temporary protective measures for key American industries," long-term concessions from labor, a new Bretton Woods conference, etc. Some of these ideas (the gas tax, for instance) are pretty good. But we do, after all, have certain democratic institutions here to take care of these matters. And they have done a decent job, especially in the three years since Felix's last jeremiad came out in the *NYRB*. Anyway, the stock market is happy. Why is it that big-time financiers prefer nondemocratic solutions to public problems? Could it be that they like pushing buttons better than pulling levers?

J.K.G.

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Medical Research–building a healthier future

If you've ever been treated for high blood pressure... heart disease...diabetes...or almost any health problem, medical progress based on research has already touched your life.

Because of medical research, polio no longer strikes in epidemic proportions every summer. Today about three-quarters of patients diagnosed as having Hodgkin's disease will survive five years or longer—as opposed to less than half twenty years ago. Current treatment options for people with heart disease and high blood pressure include medication that helps the body's natural regulators to control blood pressure and volume, enabling the heart to function with less strain.

Scientists are now working on new ways of treating such devastating afflictions as heart disease, cancer and Alzheimer's disease. They are testing new enzyme inhibitors that may control or reverse the late complications of diabetes. Forthcoming breakthroughs in understanding biological processes and treating disease may change the quality and perhaps the length of your life.

Medical research leading to such results takes years of patient, often frustrating experimentation by many different teams throughout the public and private sectors of our scientific community. The tasks involved are not simple.

Advances in research stem from a partnership that includes federal agencies such as the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Alcohol, Drug Abuse and Mental Health Administration (ADAMHA), universities and teaching hospitals across America, and private industry laboratories. Each partner often works independently to acquire knowledge and test new concepts. They must build on the knowledge developed in all laboratories, and they often coordinate efforts in their search for answers.

Whether an idea originates in a university laboratory or starts with basic product research carried on in the private sector, important findings percolate through the entire scientific community, where each new finding serves as a building block to establish a deeper understanding of what we are and how we function.

Medical research is an expensive process. It needs steady funding for equipment and personnel—even when progress is slow. Government and industry often work with university-based scientists and the medical profession not only in the acquisition of new knowledge and the development of new treatments, but also in funding these advances.

Now more than ever, we all must do our part to help keep the flow of discoveries active and ongoing. If funding for medical research is reduced, major advances in knowledge about some of the most dreaded diseases facing us today could be delayed for years to come.

What can you do?

- *Speak up.* Let your legislators know that you want funding of biomedical research by NIH and other government agencies to be kept at the highest possible levels.
- *Contribute* to voluntary health organizations supporting disease research.

Research-based pharmaceutical companies such as Pfizer are also increasing their financial investment in research. For instance, in 1984 alone, pharmaceutical companies in the United States spent over 4 *billion* dollars on research and product development.

At the same time, we at Pfizer realize the importance of committing more than money to research. As a partner in healthcare, we are continually working to discover new ideas, test new concepts, and turn new understanding to practical and beneficial uses. Now we are working harder than ever to make sure that this nation's medical research effort receives the attention—and funding—it deserves.

For more information on the future of medical research in America, write to Health Research U.S.A., P.O. Box 3852 FR, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163.

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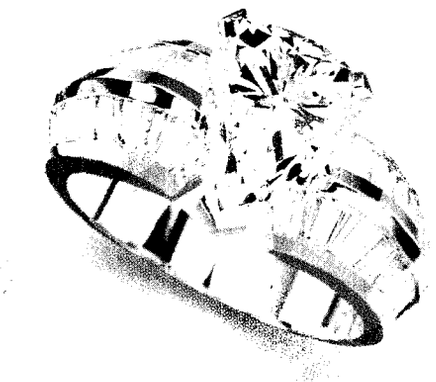
TO KINDLE A GREAT FIRE, BEGIN WITH A BRILLIANT SPARK.

Every quality diamond of a carat or more is one of nature's rarest and most exquisite phenomena—with more fire, more sparkle and scintillation.

Each is a visible reflection of you. Unique in all the world, possessing four characteristics that set it apart forever. They are called the 4C's: Cut, Color, Clarity and Carat-weight. These determine the value of a diamond—and to an astonishing degree, the beauty and value of your jewelry.

Your jeweler is the expert where diamonds are concerned. His knowledge can help make the acquisition of a quality diamond of a carat or more the beautiful, rewarding experience it should be.

A diamond is forever.



A QUALITY DIAMOND OF A CARAT OR MORE.
A FIRE RARELY SEEN.

The ring shown features
a quality diamond of 2.66 carats.

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